



# SAINTS AND SINNERS.

EVANGELIST MEIKLE.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

REV. DR. METAVISH.

RAISTAR, N. C.  
HARRIS & COMPANY  
1886

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TALKS  
TO  
SAINTS AND SINNERS,

BY  
EVANGELIST MEIKLE.

WITH  
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REV. DR. McTAVISH.

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## INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

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TO THOSE AMONG WHOM I HAVE LABOURED :

*Dear Friends*,—When I read the accompanying sketch, I had mingled feelings of shame and gratitude ; the former for its blackness ; the latter for its brightness ; both known fully to God alone. A hope of inciting similar sinners to seek God, and of encouraging mourning Mothers not to despair of their wandering boys, and a desire to magnify God's grace, alone induce me to allow its publication.

Lest any should take license from such histories and think they too will turn sometime and all be well, remember the boy who for bad deeds drove nails in a post and for good deeds drew them out, thinking the two cancelled, forgetting that *the holes were left*. Sin in early life even forsaken and forgiven leaves wounds and weaknesses.

These “talks” were written from memory when restrained from active work. They are only a few of the many we have had together, and none I regret of the morning or afternoon ones.

For the title—“talks”—I offer no apology, as it translates as correctly as any, the word *laleo*, which occurs oftener than any other, to express the method of teaching, in the work of Jesus and his early followers.

For the “talks” I earnestly pray that even more blessing may accompany them in this form, than God granted to follow their oral delivery.

I close, testifying with John Newton, “I'm not what I *ought* to be ; I'm not what I *might* be ; I'm not what I *want* to be ; I'm not what I *hope* to be ; I'm not what I *used* to be ; but by the grace of God I am what I am.”

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM MEIKLE.

GRANVILLE FERRY, N. S.,

*Dec. 30th, 1887.*

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

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AFTER considerable persuasion I have been permitted to write a brief prefatory sketch of the life and labors of the author of these gospel addresses. I argued that if the addresses were likely to be used of God, in bringing blessing to the hearts of those who read them, why should a life, that has shown forth the wonderful grace of God not also be used in a similar way. It will also give interest to those readers who have not had the privilege of hearing Mr. Meikle speak, or of knowing him personally. William Meikle was born in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, on the fourth day of January, 1856, and was the eldest son of Adamson Meikle. When Willie was but nine years of age his father, leaving the family behind in the meantime, went to push his fortune in that El Dorado of the West, California. Owing to this departure of his father his earliest recollections all entwine themselves about his godly and devoted mother, and to her chiefly he owes, under God; all that he now is or will become in the service of his Master. From his earliest boyhood he cordially hated school, and somehow contrived to play truant for weeks at a time. He would actually sicken himself by swallowing tobacco, so that he might be allowed to stay at home. Still, even in those early days, he was not — as he often seemed to be —



insensible to his mother's tears, as she lovingly and faithfully punished him for his wrong-doing. When at school he made rapid progress, and soon entered the High School. Still study was very distasteful to him, and when he reached fourteen his mother decided to apprentice him to business. Accordingly he was placed in the wholesale dry goods house of Howard & Sons, Halifax. Here he was cast on the billowy sea of city life, and though Christian friends agreed to look after his religious training, he managed to avoid both Church and Sabbath School, and began to drift rapidly toward a dangerous shore. He avoided Christian company and became acquainted with an old soldier, who proved a most dangerous companion. He not only initiated young Meikle into the ways of intemperance, but only the restraining grace of God, wonderfully manifested, prevented him from becoming his tutor in all forms of vice and wickedness. Indeed, the Evangelist often thanks God for His grace, which now and always prevented excesses which must have ever proved a source of weakness and regret. Hard at work in the place of business often till after midnight, one night he stood in the rain receiving goods, and took a cold, which resulted in typhoid fever. For three weeks he lay in a state of unconsciousness.

When sufficiently recovered he went home, where he remained for several months regaining strength. During all this time he had few, if any, serious thoughts regarding spiritual things. A mother's training had so impressed itself upon his habits that he said his prayers, read the Bible, and attended Church and Sabbath School regularly. Even in his wildest and most reckless days he never neglected to say his prayers at night.

When strong enough for work he was apprenticed to Mr. Bell, a druggist in New Glasgow, and it was during his apprenticeship here that he ran the gauntlet of recklessness and carousal. After business hours he and about a dozen other young men frequently joined together and spent the nights in drinking and folly. These were the days during which he almost broke his loving mother's heart. She never went to bed until her erring boy came home, and latterly that was not till far on toward morning. He used every device and excuse to conceal his real life and conduct from her, yet she began to think her hopes were belying her fears, and her son's future pressed he with a heavy burden. Night after night "the boys" were accustomed to congregate in a bar-room and have what was called "a big time." What the real character of that "big time" was I leave it to the reader to imagine. Some who read this sketch will know with bitter recollections and from sad experience what it means. Mr. Meikle's special chum had a horse and carriage at his disposal, and together they used to drive to all the towns and villages within reach, in search of fun and frolic. With about a dozen companions he drove on one occasion to a Sacrament about twelve miles from home. It was a beautiful Sabbath day, and the large assemblage of devout worshippers were greatly shocked at the irreverent conduct of this half-drunken crowd. He seemed to be on a rapid down grade, and each week found him worse and lower than the preceeding. On one occasion he went with his mother and some friends to Pictou to hear Philip Philips sing; but instead of going to the church, as he had intended, he went off with some boon companions and got on a spree. On the way home he was deeply

ashamed of his condition in the presence especially of his beloved mother. One night he and two other chums tried who could drink the most. After the unholy striving was over he went out, and on the street stumbled against a policeman, who seized him, and a struggle ensued, in which the policeman broke his cane over his combatant's head. This sobered Mr. Meikle, and as he was more than a match for the officer of the law he cleared out, and being afraid of pursuit, he ran to the north of the town, where, overcome with fatigue and drunken stupor, he lay down behind a log by the wayside on a cold winter's night and fell asleep. He would doubtlessly have perished there had not a friend, who was passing, seen him and roused him up. Yet during all those days of wild excess he wore an outward aspect of respectability. He attended to his duties in the drug store without missing an hour, and on Sabbath he sang in the church choir.

After a time he left the drug store, and, having nothing to do, he entered heartily into the organization of a fife and drum corps. In order to raise funds for this they gave theatricals in New Glasgow, Stellarton and other places, in all of which he took a leading part. He was a hero among "the boys." It was about this time—the spring of 1875—that a great wave of religious revival was sweeping over the Eastern part of Nova Scotia, and a deep interest was kindled in almost all the churches. Congregations, where the people had been long and faithfully taught, were quickened to spiritual zeal and decision, while others that had been slumbering in formality and apathy were aroused to prayer and confession of sin. The result was a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the ingathering of hundreds of souls to the fold of Jesus Christ.

About the time when Mr. Meikle was most interested in his fife and drum corps special services were begun in one of the churches in New Glasgow. Passing it one night he said: "Wouldn't it be a good idea to get that costume of the Devil which they have for the skating carnival, and, putting it on, get into the pulpit and fly down to scare the life out of those praying people." Not long after he was glad to rise saying to these very people, "Pray for me." Before this was brought about he and one of his chums attended the meetings for about a week, but were always more or less under the influence of strong drink. Then he ceased attending the services altogether, and went, if possible, into wilder excesses than ever. One evening his mother, speaking of seeing the minister who was conducting the special services, pleaded with her erring son to attend the meeting again, which he promised to do, just to please her. He little dreamed when he gave that promise that the consequences would be so momentous as they turned out to be. That evening he went up to the church, but as it seemed full he turned about and hurried down town. However his promise troubled him, and again he sought the church. When he reached the place the ushers were carrying in additional seats, and they urged him to come and take one of the vacant seats at the front. But a front seat in a revival meeting was a little too much for him, so he went down town again. Yet however much he had lost respect for himself, he still had respect for his mother, and his promise to her he could not get out of his mind. So he again returned to the church, and as it was quite full, he took a seat on a table in the lobby and listened to what was going on. At the close of the service the minister

gave an earnest invitation to any who were anxious to remain for the enquiry meeting. As he sat on the table he said to himself: "I'll remain." He had to retire to let the people pass, but as soon as all were out he said to some of his chums: "Come on in, boys." So a number went in, took a seat, and were spoken to by the workers. He was not very anxious, and does not remember anything definitely said to him; but from that night he resolved to break company with sin and seek God. About this time an afternoon prayer meeting was commenced in Mr. Hugh Ross' joiner shop, and here not a few of Mr. Meikle's companion's professed to find Christ; but though he attended all the meetings and was deeply in earnest, he found no peace. Once he got almost desperate and thought he could not be one of the elect, and was only prevented from rushing into excess to drown his convictions by the promise: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Like many others, he was seeking peace through the works of the law, and thought if he was in earnest and read and prayed and exhorted others to seek Christ, which he began to do, that God would give him peace. But no peace came. He used to look long and earnestly at a picture of our Saviour in Fleetwood's Life of Christ, but still he got no comfort. Why no one took him and showed the way of salvation in Christ is now a mystery to himself, as it will be to many readers of this record. Still the number of Christian ministers and laymen who, notwithstanding their profound theological knowledge, are unable to show an anxious sinner the way of salvation in its naked simplicity, is by no means small. He was almost discouraged; but as the darkest hour in the night is just before the dawn, so it

proved in his case. The truth dawned upon his mind that he did not need to work for salvation, for all was *done* in Christ. The simplicity of this truth staggered him at first, but when realized it became to him like a heavenly inspiration. He began at once to seek for the salvation of others, and like many a young convert, wondered that every one did not see the truth as he saw it. He began with others to hold meetings in the adjoining country—singing and speaking for Christ wherever and whenever an opportunity presented itself. In the autumn of 1875 he began to attend the High School again, and continued there for nearly two years, though his time was somewhat broken by the special services in which he engaged. About a year after his conversion he was tried in the furnace of affliction. That Godly mother, who had so faithfully taught him and so long struggled in prayer for his conversion, was called home to her rest and reward. Among her parting words to him were: "Willie, I can die easier now that you are a good boy." He was crushed by this blow, and felt as though he could never smile again. About this time he became acquainted with Mr. Gerrior, who was converted during the same remarkable movement. In the winter of 1876 they together began holding meetings at different points, with many manifestations of the Holy Spirit's presence. They went to Westville, hired a hall, and distributed notices of a meeting to be held by two young men. The evening arrived, they lighted the hall and waited, but no one came. A travelling pedler was selling his wares on the street, and this had a greater attraction for the crowd than the blessings of the gospel. Nothing daunted, the young Evangelists opened the window and began to sing. At length about a



dozen came. The meetings went on, and soon the hall became too small for the crowds that came, so that they had to seek for a larger place, and there were many conversions. They had outdoor meetings for the miners at the Albion Mines, which were greatly blessed to many, some of whom were soon after killed in an explosion.

In the autumn of 1877 Mr. Meikle decided to go to College, and in company with James Murray—now Rev. James Murray, B. D., of Streetsville, Ont.—he set out in search of a College, and after a few days they found themselves in Kingston, registered as undergraduates of Queen's University. It was during these College days that the writer became acquainted with Mr. Meikle. Being in the same year, and boarding for a time in the same lodgings, we became intimate friends. As a College student Mr. Meikle was distinguished for his close application and his wide grasp of many subjects. In the classes of Chemistry, Natural Science History, Hebrew, Metaphysics and Ethics he took first prize, and although owing to the arrangement of classes he was not always in competition with members of his own year, yet among them he occupied a foremost place. Hence he combines with the enthusiasm and vigor of the true Evangelist, the application and mental grasp of a thorough student, which now gives him great advantage in the presentation of the most difficult truths.

Wishing to see something of American life, at the close of his University course in 1881, when he received the degree of B. A., he went to Princeton, N. J., and entered the Seminary there as a theological student. There he fully sustained his Canadian reputation as a superior student,

Like many an ardent young Christian, he found that close application to secular study had a depressing effect upon his spiritual energies, and while he did good service in the vacations in Home Missionary work, during the winter of 1883, while spending the Christmas holidays with Mr. Gerrior in Nova Scotia, he received such a baptism of the Holy Spirit as quickened into full activity all his natural and acquired abilities. The water that had been poured upon the altar did not prevent the Divine fire from consuming the sacrifice. During the summer of 1883 they held Evangelistic meetings in various places in Nova Scotia with very marked tokens of success. At Ottawa, in May, 1884, he was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew, Ont., and at once commenced a series of meetings, in company with Mr. Gerrior, in Bristol, Que., Admaston, White Lake, and Lindsay, Ont., with marked success. During 1885-86 he held meetings almost entirely in the Maritime Provinces. A mighty outpouring of the Spirit accompanied these services in many places. In Truro, N. S., Moncton, N. B., and Sydney and North Sydney, C. B., hundreds were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, and many were led out into active service. One marked feature of this work was the interest awakened among the railway men. Scores of them were converted all along the line of the Intercolonial Railway wherever meetings were held. During the summer season he used a large tent, and found it useful in reaching the non-church-going masses, who are often averse to entering churches.

In October, 1886, he was married, and while on his marriage trip engaged in work in Wisconsin, U. S., holding services at LaCrosse, Wausaw, Neenah and Beaver Dam.

When on his way East he stopped in Chicago for a few days, and while there received an urgent call to go to Winnipeg, Man. He decided to go, and was the means of reaching and influencing more people there, than in any one place he had yet visited. All the Evangelical Churches were united in the work. The city was thoroughly moved, the meetings were thronged by thousands, and often the inquiry rooms were so crowded that it was difficult to work among the anxious. By these services not only were hundreds converted, but a great impetus was given to Christian work in this metropolis of the Prairie Province.

During the summer of 1887 he held Evangelistic services in Amherst, N. S., and Charlottetown, P. E. I., and even crossed the banks of Newfoundland and held services at St. John's.

Mr. Meikle has many qualities that peculiarly fit him for Evangelistic work, though his zeal and success so far are the only credentials he needs.

1. His own experience has given him an intimate knowledge of the ways of young men; therefore he has not only sympathy for them, but wonderful power over them.

2. He has not only a sound body, but a sound and well-trained mind. He is therefore, a workman that need not be ashamed—able rightly to divide the word of truth.

3. He has readiness in answer, power of making good use of illustrations and the gift of song—all of which are specially useful in this work.

4. He has had a deep Christian experience, and may be called, indeed, a "whole-souled Christian."

5. He presents a clear, full Gospel with excellent taste and intense earnestness, and is not carried away by any of those hobbies that are apt to mar the usefulness of so many Evangelists.

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Such is a brief outline of the life of one who has had the seal of God placed upon his labors, and who will yet, we hope, be the means, in God's hand, of leading many precious souls into the Redeemer's kingdom.

D. McTAVISH.

LINDSAY, Ont., Dec. 12th, 1887.



## RECIPE FOR A REVIVAL.

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II. CHRONICLES, xv., 1—15.\* *And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah, the son of Oded, and he went out to meet Asa, v. 1.*

I WISH you to notice, first, that the coming of the Holy Ghost upon one man was the cause of the gracious revival recorded in this chapter. And if we are to have a revival the first thing we must do is, "honour the Holy Ghost." If anything is really to be accomplished it must be by His agency.

I sometimes see in a paper that so-and-so, the *Revivalist*, has arrived ; indeed, I have seen it about ourselves ; but I deny and disprove the title. We do not profess to carry revivals, which we can dispense at pleasure. I believe there is such a thing as a genuine revival ; but it is not gotten *up*, it is gotten *down*. I know also that there is such a thing as a specious and fictitious religious movement. Men with an amount of magnetic power, accompanied by apparent earnestness and certain methods, may arouse a community and create much religious excitement. This can also be done in politics, temperance, etc. But a real work of grace is "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

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\*Read these verses.

A legend tells us of four men who came to a tomb to raise a dead man. The first man went in with various salts contained in vessels, and rubbing with them, endeavoured to induce resurrection ; but there was no power, no life. The second entered with scorpions, serpents, etc., which stung and did their best ; but there was no life. The third went in with instruments of music, and being a skilled player, discoursed sweet sounds and pleasing harmony ; still there was no effect. When the fourth was to enter he said, "wait a moment ;" and going away he returned with Jesus, who stood at the mouth of the tomb and said, "Come forth." Ah ! friends, that's it ! We may have all the salts and essences of good works and earnest efforts—we may have the terrors of the law and severe methods—we may have polished preaching and pleasing music, but unless Jesus is present by the Spirit, all is vain.

Then follows, in verses 2 to 8, the message of Azariah to Asa. In verse 8 begins the result, and with this we continue. "When Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet *he took courage.*" The first result of a message delivered in the power of the Holy Ghost was *courage.* And what an essential element this is in order to be successful in Christian work. Some one has said, "God seldom uses a discouraged man." It is certain that He can do more with a few inspired with holy boldness than with multitudes filled with doubts and fears. In Deuteronomy xx. we have the instructions of God to His people on their "going to battle against their enemies." Whatever their number or equipment, He says, "Be not afraid of them" (v. 1) ; "let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified" (v. 3). Moreover, as they



approached to battle the officers were to say, "What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted let him go and return unto his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint as well as his heart" (v. 8). And you remember the practical illustration of this in Judges vii. Gideon was going against a mighty host with only 32,000 men, and the above request being made as to those who were "fearful and afraid," "there returned of the people twenty and two thousand." I suppose if we had similar authority and would all be honest there would be a big rush for home if only those who have true divine courage remained. Courage, then, will be one of the first results of receiving the Holy Ghost in power. Peter and the other Apostles before Pentecost were easily discouraged and frightened; after that they do not seem to have known fear. Few expressions occur oftener in the Bible than "fear not." God knows our natural cowardliness in spiritual things, and coupled with the "fear not" we generally find the promise, "I will be with thee." I heard of three Christian men who had a work to do, and who met together to discuss the prospects. After looking carefully at the matter they felt afraid to attempt it. The difficulties were too great, and they were too weak and too few. When about parting, one having remarked something about his *nothingness*, an idea flashed into the mind of another, and he said, "You say you are nothing and this other brother is nothing. I am certainly nothing, but three nothings (000) with one (1) before it makes a thousand (1,000.)" Now Christ has said, "Lo I am with you alway," and encouraged by his promise and presence they determined to undertake the work. Now, dear friends, the difficulties are great and the obstacles

many ; but like a General of old, Christ stands and says, "How much do you count on me?" Will not his presence dismiss our fears and nerve our hearts?

Having gained courage we read (v. 8): "And *put away the abominable idols* out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin and out of the cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim." It does not take much courage to put away other people's idols, but it requires a good deal to say honestly:

"The dearest idol I have known,  
Whate'er that idol be,  
Help me to tear it from the throne,  
And worship only Thee."

If I commence to describe or enumerate idols which should be put away some brother will say, "That exactly suits Mr. So-and-so, and I hope he will take it;" or some good sister will think, "How does he know so well about Mrs. Somebody-else?" It's so easy to apply truth to others. The preacher, too, may overlook his own heart. I read the other day of a town in which there were two doctors of the same name—one a Dr. of Divinity, the other of Medicine. The latter was asked if there was any difference between them. "Oh, yes," he said, "he's the Dr. that *preaches*, and I'm the Dr. that *practices*." God help us not only to preach, but to practice.

"He *put away* the idols." It's good to find out and confess our idols, but they must also be put away.

In Hosea II., 14, we read: "I will give you the valley of Acchor for a door of hope." The children of Israel had been defeated, and God had told them that He would be with them no more, as there was *sin* in the camp. The sin

was then found out, confessed, and in the valley of Acchor *put away*. This same "door of hope" God sets before us. If we are to have a genuine revival there must be a putting away of idols that are hindering God's presence and power. I can't enumerate these idols, but must leave it with the conscience of each person. If you are a true Christian, and are indulging any sin of commission or omission, God, by His spirit, is convincing you of it. You know that thing which comes up nearly every time you open the Bible, and every time you engage in prayer, even now it's before you. Well, friend, by God's grace stop it—put it away. Let us have courage and put away our idols.

The next thing we read is (v. 8): "*And renewed the altar of the Lord* that was before the porch of the Lord." While religion is cold the altars get broken down. I take this to mean for us, not sacrifice, but prayer—the altar of incense. It's astonishing how this altar is neglected, and not only neglected, but used to no purpose; for we must not only pray, but we must pray aright.

Theologians tell us that there are four things in true prayer, viz.: adoration, confession, thanksgiving and petition. We come to God adoring and magnifying His great name; we acknowledge His greatness and holiness and confess our weakness and sinfulness; we thank Him for past blessings, although too often this element is forgotten; then we are prepared for petition, which includes, intercession for others and asking for ourselves. In this we come with a great sense of need, in deep earnestness, by the aid of the Holy Spirit through the name of Jesus, in union with others, and we are importunate. All this is good and right; but another thing, of which I fear there is less than anything else is

necessary, for we read: "Without *faith* it is impossible to please Him."

I must not judge, but I have an idea that you could put the faith all of us have, in a very small compass. I mean real good, honest, square faith—I mean *trust in God* apart from feelings, appearances, circumstances or anything else. How scarce a thing this is! I'm often amused the way people act when we visit a place. Often for the first few meetings things look pretty dark—small attendance; little interest; no breaking down. At the close of the meetings people quietly dismiss looking, and I suppose feeling downcast. After a little the clouds break, the drops are multiplied, the showers fall; Christians are quickened, backsliders are reclaimed, sinners are being saved. Now men and women come after meeting looking bright and happy, and shaking hands say, "God bless you, brother! This is just what we have been looking and praying for." That's the kind of faith most people have, viz., sight. Why, anyone can believe after they see it. When the horse ran away with the old lady, after it was all over she was asked how she got along. "Oh," she said, "I trusted God till the harness broke, after that I felt afraid." Isn't that it? As long as we *see* something to lean our faith against we are all right; but when it comes to simply trusting God a good many are like the woman of whom Gough tells. During a great storm at sea she rushed on deck and asked the captain what the prospects were. He said, "I'm afraid, madam, we will now have to trust Providence." "Oh my!" she exclaimed, "is it come to that?" Many of us have no more faith than this.

A story that illustrates many of our prayers is the old one of the person who prayed for a certain thing, and in the

morning, seeing that it was not answered, exclaimed, "Just as I expected." Perhaps you do not like these stories. Well, I don't care much for them myself ; but they are one of the best ways I know of teaching truth. Certainly, no one can object to a Bible story. The church one time was earnestly praying to God for a certain thing. I suppose they were saying, "O, Lord, Thou knowest about Thy servant who is in prison, Thou knowest how we shall miss him, Thou art able to deliver him, walls and soldiers are no barrier to Thee." As they prayed thus a knock was heard. A damsel answered it and quickly returned, saying that Peter was at the door. "No," they answered, "Peter is in jail ; if it looks like him it must be his ghost." Here they were praying for a thing and expecting it so little that they were astonished and afraid when it was answered.

And how astonished some of us would be if God answered our prayers. I remember working once with a minister for a few weeks with little result. At the end of this time, one night he said, "There are some things about these meetings I don't like." I replied, "Well, brother, I wish you had told me this sooner, as it's best to be honest and understand each other ; but what do you object to?" He answered, "I don't like these after-meetings nor these testimony-meetings." Then I asked, "Didn't I hear you pray at the commencement of this service 'O, Lord, give us a Pentecostal outpouring of Thy spirit ?'" "Yes, you did." "Well, brother, if God had taken you at your word and answered your prayer you would have both things you do not like before five minutes, for the people would call out, 'What must we do ?' and you would have to tell them ; and besides, as at Pentecost, men and women would be up testifying, whether you objected or not."

Friends, let us have faith in God ! Let us pray and expect blessings. God honours faith. He loves to be trusted. I read a sarcasm on our prayers, which I think too true. A child came to its father and said, "dear father, you are a great man—you have great possessions and great treasures, indeed are immensely rich ; besides you are not only great but good, and you love me very much and are willing to do great things for me. *Please father, give me a penny.*" Wouldn't that father feel insulted ? Yet how often we come to God our Father, and after telling Him how great He is, having made the heavens and the earth—and how good and loving He is, having given us His Son—end by asking Him for some paltry blessing. Friends, we must not only have courage and put away our idols if we expect a real Revival, but we must renew the altar of prayer—in our social meetings—in our families, and in our closets. And not only formal prayer but real prayer characterized by all the elements referred to above, especially *faith*.

"And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manassah and out of Simeon : *for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.*" Here we have the method of getting the people together, or, as we say, of "drawing the crowd," or "reaching the outsiders." And notice that it is not by any new-fangled methods or sensational means that this end is attained, but by getting the Lord with them. Let it be noised abroad that the Lord is with us here in mighty power, or rather let us get the Lord with us in great power, and it will soon be noised abroad ! And let it so be known in this place and surrounding country and you will soon find that it will be difficult to get a place large enough to hold the people.



*"So they gathered themselves together."* (It is necessary to have meetings.) *"And they offered unto the Lord, the same time, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep."* They became courageous—put away all idols—began to pray—gathered together—and here we see they were willing it should cost them something. In this they differ from many who talk and even pray about a Revival, but do not wish it should cost them much. I do not refer particularly to money, although this is an important item for necessary expenses; I refer rather to work of various kinds and especially to *time*. You would like to see a Revival in which your young men and young women would be saved, but how much are you willing to give for it? How much are you willing to do towards it? How much time are you willing to spend? How much are you willing it should cost you? I find many are like the man in Elisha's time. A woman's only son died and she wished to go to the prophet about it, and so sent to the field where her husband was busy with the harvest and asked for one of the asses and a driver. He said: "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? It is neither new moon nor Sabbath." Just so! He was willing to go at the orthodox times;—but this going off when it cost so much. Has not man changed very little since then? So many still say: "Well, I believe in fast days and Sabbath; but this asking a fellow to close his store or leave his work to attend afternoon meetings or services every night is all humbug." Ah, friend, you are not willing to "offer spoil"—that it should cost you something. This is one great cause why so little is being done. Just look at the poor attendance at prayer meetings compared with the Sabbath services. And why? Because it might cost something to attend during

the week. Some pleasure or company might have to be foregone, or some profit might be missed.

*"And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul."* By this means they showed further that they were "dead-in-earnest." I heard Mr. Moody relate how he startled a man by saying to him, that although he was not a prophet, yet he could tell him the very moment when he would find God. And it was "and ye shall seek Me and find Me when ye shall search for Me *with all your heart.*" And so I'll tell you that you will have a genuine revival when you agree as these people did to seek God with all your heart and with all your soul.

*"That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman."* A short way of dealing with those who opposed the revival! Now, while we can't take and shoot you who oppose God's word, I tell you honestly God will kill you. I don't mean if you disagree with our methods, for in this there is room for difference of opinion; but I do mean if you are not in sympathy with the quickening of the church and the salvation of souls. I never knew anyone to oppose God's work who did not lose their moral influence—God killed them.

*"And they swear unto the Lord with a loud voice and with shouting and with trumpets and with cornets."* They were not ashamed, but were out-and-out in their search for God. In this we have valuable suggestions, which I must pass for the closing words, for the sake of which I chose this chapter. The Spirit of God came—they became courageous—put away their idols—began to pray—met together

and were willing it should cost them something, and were not ashamed, "AND HE WAS FOUND OF THEM, *and the Lord gave them rest round about.*" A receipe for a revival. If you have a good receipe and you carefully and faithfully follow it, do you not expect a certain result? Of course you do. Well, here is a receipe from God's word. I do not say let us try it and perhaps we will have blessing; I do not ask you to experiment and possibly there will be a revival. I believe it is as certain as God's word if we truly fulfil the conditions.

I used to hear men pray and say, "Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but God alone can give the increase." This was quoted as a set-off to the fact as was also told the Lord that things were not in a very good condition. The church was cold and dead—sinners were indifferent and unsaved, but then, you know, "Paul may plant and Apollos may water." We may be doing our part faithfully and well, but "God alone can give the increase." It's after all His fault that matters are in this condition, and we must wait His sovereign grace. Now, I believe with all my heart in the sovereignty of God, but I do not believe one word of the above insinuation. Besides, as quoted, it does not occur in the Bible. Paul was writing to the Corinthians. He says: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God *gave* the increase." They did their part and God did His. Of course He did; and so He is still waiting and willing to do. Are we ready to do our part, viz.; to fulfil the conditions? Will we honor the Holy Ghost? become courageous? put away all idols? begin to pray in faith? meet together? be willing to spend and be spent? and be out and out about it? then shall be "showers of blessing." God grant it.

## CHRISTIANS GOD'S FELLOW-WORKERS.

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*"For we are laborers together with God."*--I. Cor., iii., 9th verse, 1st clause.

THE context brings God's providential relation to our world before us, as that of a husbandman or builder, for the Apostle says : "Ye are God's husbandry"—"God's building." The world, then, has to be cultivated and harvested, a building has to be erected, and in this undertaking God, out of his own good pleasure, has associated us in as much as our text affirms that we are "God's fellow-workers." (R. V.)

From this we learn that *God uses human instrumentality*. The world is His husbandry—His building. In His vineyard He is always working ; on His superstructure He is continually employed, and in this work "we are laborers together with him." Not that He could not dispense with our efforts, or that He might not employ other agents, but "He has put the treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." And all He requires of us is that we should be "empty that He might fill us ;" "broken that His grace might flow through us ;" or, as the Apostle says, "Purged and sanctified meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

The use by the Almighty of human instrumentality has been exemplified in all His dealings with mankind. Sometimes in the history of His people, the instrumentalities employed on their behalf, were the powers of nature, or the beings of light, and not unfrequently God interposed directly on their behalf; but human instrumentality was and continues to be God's most frequent and most potent agent. Hence we find that to all He has given talents for the proper use of which he holds us accountable. By the use of them they are developed and multiplied. But how can this be unless God uses human instrumentality? This He as assuredly does in His spiritual husbandry, as we do in temporal husbandries.

It is in the person of Christ, however, that we see this both inculcated and exemplified, and in no instance more beautifully than at the grave of Lazarus. "Take ye away the stone," said the voice of Him who immediately exclaimed: "Come forth!" And having done by His omnipotence what human effort could not accomplish He again illustrates as He bids His Disciples "loose him and let him go," that God uses human instrumentality in as much as "we are His fellow-workers."

We learn from this in the *second* place that *all Christians should be workers*. Throughout the Bible the word come sounds forth and reaches the ears of the weary, thirsty and heavy laden, bringing joy, and when accepted, life and peace. But no sooner do we obey the *come* than we receive the *go*: "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard." Not as some apparently interpret it; "Stand and watch others," or "be overseers." No; but as laborers. Christ in this, as in

other respects, is our example. Early in life he said: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business," and later on "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day," while almost his last words were, "It is finished." If, then, we are to follow our Master we must be laborers.

Cromwell expressed the feeling that Christians should manifest when he came to a church in Yorkshire and saw silver statues of the Apostles placed in appropriate places around the building. He asked what they were, and on being informed said, "Take them down and send them about doing good," and smelting them, he coined them for use in his treasury. How many professing Christians are little better than statues, whereas God intended and wishes all to be actively doing good. And surely there is work for all to do. Do any say Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Why look out upon the fields and see them "white for the harvest," and will the question not be what shall I do first? what can I do best? where can I accomplish most?

Think for a few minutes of the many forms of Christian work. There is preaching, teaching and testifying. Preaching the Gospel I consider the grandest and noblest work in which we can engage. I believe that every one should covet the privilege, and nothing but the clear will of God should prevent every man from engaging in it. Still, it is certain that all have not the gifts or qualifications necessary for this work; but all can testify, and God says to Christians, "Ye are my witnesses." How many say they can't speak to people about these things nor testify in a

meeting. I would like to follow some of you men who say this to your work, and hear you talking business or politics. I tell you, you can lay it down good, with appropriate gestures and enthusiasm. "But, oh! I couldn't say a word in a prayer meeting."

And some of you sisters, whose voices are seldom or never heard in behalf of Christ, either in public or private, can talk first-rate if you have some news or gossip to tell. The men say it's hard to get in a word edgewise when you get started. In fact, get people interested, or, as we say, "full" of any subject, and most of them can talk about it. Doesn't the Bible say something like this? "From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." You better then fear lest your want of talk and testimony is not so much that you *can't* as that you *don't want to*.

But so many say "I would rather *live* than talk religion." By all means, if you are only going to do one, *live it*: but why not do *both*? Do you mean to insinuate that those who *talk* do not *live*? Certainly there is too much of this, and in our day I'm convinced that what is wanted after all is not more talking and testifying, but more consistent *walking* and Godly *living*. Well, friend, you can certainly do this, so that here is another grand way for all to work for God. You live in a house—you work in a shop—you meet people every day—if you want to "labour with God" do it as Paul says, "by manifestations of the truth"—that is, giving a living example of it. It is said that Benjamin Franklin was anxious to get the farmers in the neighbourhood of his farm to use a certain fertilizer. He explained to them the theory of its benefits, etc., but they would not

use it. Then he sowed a field near to the road with grain, sowing a piece with the fertilizer in the shape of the words "This was sown with bone dust." After a little the whole field began to look green, but above it all, taller, greener, stronger and more healthful looking, came the piece sown in the shape of "This was sown with bone dust." Here was testimony they could not deny, "a manifestation" of his theory. Now, friends, we want more of this in religion. We want more men and women to whom we can point and say, "There's what the religion of Christ can do for people."

Then there is teaching in the Sabbath School, visiting the sick, and distributing tracts. What splendid ways of "labouring with God!"—but I must not commence to speak on these points. However, I must mention two more ways, viz., first, *giving of our means*. How little many of us know about this. It's simply a disgrace how mean and niggardly we are in this respect. Why if the Devil did his work in the cent style which we do God's work he would have failed long ago. A friend of mine says that when he was in the mint at Philadelphia lately they were making cents. Great quantities were in sight, and he asked the manager why they were making so many. He replied: "Oh, for church collections!" We should be ashamed, for it's too true. Just look at the money spent in liquor, tobacco, horse-racing, balls, regattas, celebrations, etc., and remember that nearly all the church funds are not only hard up but in debt. Sometime ago Mr. Gerrior and I wanted \$1,000 to fit out a tent in which to win souls; many said, "it's too much." At the same time a friend of ours was offered \$2,000 for a Jersey cow. I tell you we must waken up to this way of "labouring with God."



The last way I shall mention is by *prayerful sympathy*. If you can't engage yourself in certain forms of work you can certainly pray for and sympathise with those who do. What a mighty power this is! How I would love to show the excellency of this form of "labour with God." I wish, however, before leaving the point, that we are labourers, to say that it is absolutely necessary *if we are to have life*, that we should be active workers—as well might a man expect to be healthful in body without doing some work or having some exercise, as to be spiritually healthful without engaging in some Christian effort. Experience confirms the word of God when it affirms that "the liberal soul shall be made fat," and "he that watereth shall be watered also himself." There is a good illustration of this in the man, who, coming down the Alps, saw a fellow man lying in the snow. He himself had felt the peculiar lethargy coming over him, which precedes being entirely overcome in a cold region. Instead of hurrying on as one did who passed a few moments before, he bent down and brushed the snow from the man and went to work rubbing with all his might to bring back life. After a while his efforts were rewarded, for the man arose, grasped him by the hand and thanked him—and there they stood two saved men. While working to resuscitate the lost man he had sent the blood circulating through his own veins and saved himself. As they two descended the mountain here before them; cold in death the one lies who had not time to help his fellow man. Now friends, let me show you a picture. The sea is lashed into foam—the lightnings flash—the thunders roll, a ship is tossing in mid-ocean; she flounders, and now all are struggling for life. Then I see a cross arise out of the dark

waters and a form with arms entwined about it securely clings to it and is safe. Here is another cross, and to this one also clings a human form, but not with arms entwined, but safely clinging with one hand, the other is feeling out in the dark waters if by any means others may be saved. Which is the nobler picture? Need I answer? So safely on the "Rock of Ages" ourselves, let us remember that we are God's "fellow workers."

In the *third* place our text demands *unanimity* amongst all workers. Instead of being "labourers *together* with God," one would think to see the way many act that it was labourers *apart* for themselves or for their denomination. What an awful curse this denominationalism can be made. No man sees more of it's evil effects than an Evangelist. One of the figures used in the context is that of a building. Workers on a building are men of different "denominations," viz. ; architects, masons, bricklayers, joiners, painters, etc. Suppose that instead of "labouring together" for the beauty, strength or advancement of the structure they disagree, and do all they can to hinder its completion, what kind of success would they expect? Now here is the great temple which God is erecting, and upon it different denominations profess to be working, but what spirit do they frequently manifest towards one another? Possibly denominations are a necessity, as in the above case, or as regiments in an army. Certain it is that similarity in name, form of worship, polity, &c., would not be any better unless we had "the unity of the spirit," which it is possible to have, even as "denominations" exist. When sailing across the ocean you do not know when you enter the Gulf stream, so similar

in appearance is it to the ocean ; yet as a matter of fact they are not united, as salt water at different temperatures does not readily unite. So we might have all the churches alike and yet not have unity. But just as in the case of diamond, charcoal, and black-lead, we have great difference in name, appearance, &c., with *unity* of substance, they being only different forms of carbon, so surely we can have the existing dissimilarity in churches and yet the most perfect unity. And it is not only between different churches that want of unanimity exists, but in the same church there is often a violation of the fact that "we are labourers together with God." "Brethren, these things ought not so to be."

In the *fourth* place we have here *the source of our power*, inasmuch as "we are labourers together with God." "Paul planted—Apollos watered—God gave the increase." "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain who build it." This does not mean that we unite our power with God's, but that He works in and through us. Weak then in ourselves we may be "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." "For he hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty." "If God be for us who can be against us." Here, then, is the source of our power—and this above all things we want to remember, for looking at the church to-day we think if she lacks anything it is power. She has great machinery, not a few labourers, and much commendable zeal, but where are the results? Why is this? Because we have lost sight of the great fact that it is "not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

To illustrate the want of this power and its accompanying success let us go into one of our great factories. Here

are all the latest improvements and equipments, and engaged at each machine is a skilled employee. But all is silent and no work is being done. Why? Because there is no connection between these machines and the motive power. Now a lever is moved, some pulleys are adjusted, and quickly the scene is changed. All is commotion and bustle, for the machines are in union with the main shaft, and each instrument is doing work and fulfilling the end and design of its originator and owner.

So will it be when all the machinery which the church employs is truly united to God as his instrumentality, and this will only be attained when all labourers in God's employment realize not only that "union is strength," but that apart from union with God, the source of all power, they can accomplish nothing, and that it is only by being truly united to him that they can be his "fellow-workers."

In the *last* place our text assures us of ultimate success—yes, ultimate success—for we are not sent a warfare on our own charges—we are not asked to engage in a work whose success depends upon our own unaided endeavours, but "we are labourers together with God." Why then so easily discouraged? Why so often cast down? "*How much do you count on me?*" asked a renowned military leader of his soldiers as they despondingly discussed their chances of victory in a forthcoming engagement. And so asks our leader and co-worker of us. Frequently it appears to the true servant of God that Satan has the advantage; that his garner will be the largest and fullest; his building the greatest and best. But this is only when for the moment he grows weary in the vineyard and forgets who is the chief

husbandman, or when toiling under difficulties on God's building he loses sight of the great Master-builder. Soon, however, this passes away, for he knows well that even if the erection of God's building be gradual its ultimate completion is assured, and he also anticipates that just as the husbandman goes forth with his servants and labours together with them until the reaping over and the harvest secured, they rejoice together in the harvest home: so labouring together with God, although often weak and discouraged, he knows that "in due season he shall reap if he faint not," and that after the planting and watering will come the reaping and then the harvest, when all the true servants of God, blest with ultimate success because they "laboured together with Him," shall unite their voices in songs of praise and victory in the heavenly Paradise, and shall be forever with the Lord, amidst the glories of an eternal harvest-home.—AMEN.



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## HOW TO GET PEOPLE SAVED.

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"He that winneth souls is wise."—PROV. XI. : 30.

"They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever."—DAN. XII. : 3.

"By all means save some."—I COR. IX. : 22.

"He which converteth the sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death."—JAMES V. : 20.

IN these and similar passages, we have man's agency in saving souls emphasized. We can be the means of saving souls, and about some of the best ways of being thus used we wish to speak.

One of the first desires of a saved person is that others may be saved. As soon as the poor fellow who was found almost dead on the deck of the drifting ship was able to speak, he gasped : "There is another man ; there is another man." So as soon as Andrew found Christ, "he first findeth his own brother Simon ;" likewise, "Philip findeth Nathaniel." Thus it has always been—and I can't understand how we who profess to be saved are not more anxious that others should enjoy the same blessing.

Paul says : "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." Saved himself, he wanted others to be saved ; and although not in the same measure yet by the same spirit, I can say that I am

anxious that others should be saved. You may ask : " Why do you care ? " I'll tell you, and also why I think all you who are saved should care too.

Suppose a man travelling in some out of the way place finds an immense amount of treasure ; he takes out of it a million dollars, which is as much as most could utilize. He then returns to the town where he lives, and sees his relatives and friends worrying and striving to make a livelihood, and in great financial trouble. He has a million and knows where there are many more, but never mentions it. Suppose, again, that an awful epidemic breaks out in that town, and this man, taking the disease, goes to a neighbouring town and gets a medicine which cures him perfectly. He comes back to the town and sees his friends and acquaintances dying on the right and left, and knows the medicine that will cure them, but never says a word about it. Once more, let us imagine that this man is in a pit with many of his townspeople, and that it caves in. There they are in darkness and death. He goes away a little piece and sees a glimmer of light ; he follows it and finds a way out to liberty and home, leaving the others in the pit. What would you think of such a fellow ? Why, you say, " such a one does not live. A man having all this knowledge, who wouldn't tell his friends, must be ——." Now, friends, be careful that you do not say too much and condemn some one here. A man stands before you who says that some years ago he found the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal riches—yea, he cured him of the awful disease sin, and also took him from a fearful pit. Do not a good many of you profess the same ? Are there not many about

us poor, and diseased, and in the pit? Are you telling them about the riches? About the medicine? About the way of escape? About the Lord Jesus Christ? I believe all are who are really saved.

One of the best means, therefore, of saving others, is to be saved ourselves. But so many professing Christians do not know whether they are saved or not. Well, if such are here, I tell you it's your privilege to know. John says: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, *that ye may know* that ye have eternal life." And I sincerely wish that all Christians knew. First, for their own sakes; they would be better every way, but especially for the sake of others. What is the use of those who do not know they are saved speaking to others? I heard of three men near my home who went to speak to a man about religion. He was hard, but pretty sharp. After they had talked a while he said, pointing to one of the men: "Are you a Christian yourself?" He said, "I hope so." "And are you?" he continued, to the second, who answered: "I'm a deacon, and I hope a Christian." "And are you?" he asked of the third, who replied: "Like my brethern, I'm a professor, and I hope a Christian." "Well," said the fellow, "I hope so too." Now, these men should have given a brighter and more positive testimony. But the fact is that such kind of Christians seldom attempt to help others, and it's little assistance they could give if they did. Major Whittle relates an incident of his early life which illustrates this. He says that a lot of the boys used to swim out to a rock opposite their town, and after resting a little swim back. One day when they



got out they couldn't find the rock, and there they were, too tired to swim back and feeling about for the rock. All at once his foot touched something hard—he placed it upon it—moved over until both feet were upon the rock, and reaching out his hands he said: “Come on boys and I'll help you.” Now, supposing that he offered to assist them before he was on the rock himself. Why, friends, it's nonsense! The first thing then, if we are to be the means of saving others, is *to be saved ourselves and to know it.*

I think the next best thing is to go about getting people saved, exercising the same common sense that men generally do about other matters. Good sanctified common sense then, in the *first* place, would make us *more natural*. There is a great deal “put on” in religious speech and effort. As soon as people go to do anything religious they must get *unnatural*. Take for example, a great deal of the religious style of speaking. Spurgeon says that one night in a prayer meeting a brother rose to pray, and his voice was so low, solemn and shaky that he could not help thinking, “poor fellow; it's good you are a Christian, as your days are numbered; you are evidently in the last stage of consumption,” and he thought he must visit him at once, lest he would be too late. Accordingly, the following morning he went into the store where he worked, and as he entered he heard a man shout from the other end of the store in a full clear voice, “John, bring me that weight!” etc. Spurgeon looked in amazement. Here was the poor fellow that he had come to visit. If merchants or others whined, gasped, screamed, or in any way acted as unnaturally as a great many do in religion, they would have very little success.

In this, as in all else, Christ is our example. I can't think of Him being affected in speech or manner; I believe with the little girl, that He would be natural under all circumstances. Some one was telling her that while we are told twice that "Jesus wept," we are not told once that he smiled; but she answered, "I think He did, for unless He smiled the little children would not have gone to Him." Let us friends be perfectly natural and unaffected in speech and manner. Let us be ourselves—and "by all means save some."

The *second* thing that Christian workers could learn from worldly men is *earnestness*. Talk about earnestness and excitement, but I have seen more signs of insanity in the "Stock Exchanges" I have visited than in the noisiest religious meeting I have ever attended. Now, I don't advocate excitement, for in any matter a person can accomplish more by being cool and well balanced, but I do urge earnestness. Yes, some of you people are very cool and collected; you say, "Meikle is a hot head, it's fanaticism, excitement." How I'd like to see some of you when your house takes fire. Such shouting, running, etc. I read a card of thanks in a paper recently: "To the friends who *even at the risk of their lives* saved my goods, etc." Yes, some shop goods are in danger; run, break doors open, risk your life; and yet you very men say about our meetings and work, "Oh, keep cool; we don't believe in excitement." No you don't, you hypocrite! A mother in one of our towns said to me: "Ah, yes; Mr. Meikle, if one of my children were drowning out there in the river, there would be quite an excitement and earnest endeavour to save them; but now that they are

anxious about their souls, and attending your meetings, these same people object." I have not yet seen any one as earnest about saving souls as I have seen and heard of men saving bodies. A minister told me that when the Atlantic went down on our coast, men worked pulling the people out of the water until unable to do any more with their hands ; they rushed into the water and pulled them out with their teeth.

Here, again, our example is Christ. Was He not in earnest ? It is said of Him, " He went about doing good," and acted in such a manner that His friends said : " He is beside himself." Hunger or weariness did not abate His earnestness. Then look at Him alone all night on the mountain, or " up a great while before day to pray." See Him in Gethsemane, " sweating, as it were, drops of blood." Think of Him scourged at the pillar, and crucified on the cross, and tell me if you have ever yet seen any one in dead earnest.

The *third* thing which common sense and observation will teach us is to be *plain* and *simple*. If people in ordinary life used the same vocabulary as is often used in religion, they would not be understood. If there is anything disgusting to me, it is to hear about the subjective and objective—the transcendental, the empirical, &c., in a sermon—to the masses. It's all very well in a college lecture, but so many people have the same idea as the old woman, that it is tolerated in so-called sermons. Walking home from church she said : " Wasn't that an able discourse ? " " And what was it about ? " asked a listener. " Oh my, do you think an ignorant woman like me would

presume to understand it?" That's it—let a man use big words and mystifying language, and "he is so deep," "so profound"—so fiddlesticks!! But let a man use real good Anglo-Saxon words and homely illustrations, and he is "coarse, uneducated." Suppose when you are on your way home that you see your neighbour's house on fire, will you glide up to the front door and gently ringing the bell, say: "Please, the combustible material of your domicile is slightly ignited"? or will you shout, fire! fire! Friends, let us have more common sense. How did Jesus speak? Take the Gospel of John for an answer—and what plain, simple illustrations he used; the patched clothes, the broken bottles, the hen and her chickens, etc. Certainly those who speak plain and simple follow a good example.

In the *fourth* place, we must study *adaptation*. If we can't save the people one way, "by all means save some." Many people are so wedded to their methods, that they seem to be willing that people should perish, rather than that they should change. They hold the ordinary services, but as to aggressive, outside extraordinary effort, they don't believe in it. They remind one of the Tuscan Coast guard officer who, after a wreck, reported to his government, that, notwithstanding all the efforts he made through his speaking trumpet, most of the passengers and crew were lost. Why didn't he launch a life-boat or make use of the other means at his disposal for saving life? So I fear many will have to report that, notwithstanding all their preaching and prayer meeting talks, many perished.

But are these all the possible ways of arousing and saving souls? Jesus said: "Follow me and I will make you

fishers of men." In this figure we get a good idea of the necessity of adaptation. If the fishermen attempted to take all kinds of fish at all times and in all places in the same way, they would not have much success. This, then, should lead us to consider the different kind of people, with their peculiar temperaments, different circumstances, education, etc. The question of the right and best time has also to be looked into—then the fittest place and likeliest way to save most has to be studied.

I read of a man who was out for leeches. After fishing and working for hours with little success he walked down the stream and met a boy with quite a lot. He said: "I wish my little fellow that you would show me what kind of gear you are using, and how you catch so many?" "I will, sir," he said, and rolling up his pants he waded into the water, and stood until the leeches caught on to him, when he came out and took them off. Adaptation had a good deal to do with success in this case, hadn't it? You have doubtless read of the tract distributor who gave one on "the sinfulness of dancing," to a man who had lost his legs. Now, many use just as little judgment, not only in the selection of the most suitable means, but also of the best time and place. A man with a wooden leg who undertook to distribute tracts showed much more power of adaptation than the above distributor. At one house where he called and knocked, when the lady (?) saw who he was she attempted to slam the door. He, however, dexterously inserted his wooden leg and coolly looked over his tracts to select a suitable one, while she, in a passion, endeavoured to injure him by banging the door against his wooden limb.

How Jesus attended to adaptation. Notice and study the difference in His teaching to different temperaments, classes, etc. ; also His selection of the best time, place and way. One who said, "I will follow thee," Jesus told to count the cost. Another who offered the same was urged to do so at once, while a third was warned against "looking back." Jesus knew that the first was too rash and inconsiderate ; the second was a procrastinator, while the third was liable to temptation from melancholy and worldliness. He suited his teaching to their temperament. His disciples He taught one way—the multitudes another. The Pharisees he addressed one way—the Publicans and sinners another : for example, see his sermons to Nicodemus and to the woman of Samaria. He suited his teaching to their position and circumstances.

In the *fifth* place, let us learn in our Christian work to *have more personal effort*. If the doctors acted as we ministers and you Sabbath School teachers and parents too often do, how would they succeed ? If, instead of going around to each patient, diagnosing the case and prescribing for them, they gathered all together and gave them a lecture on diseases, medicines, etc., with occasional reference to specific cases, would they save many ? Of course they would do good, as the general principles taught would apply to all. However, they don't do this. But don't we do something very much like it ? We preach to our people or talk to our scholars *en masse*, but how little personal dealing there is. Anselm, long years ago, said that general preaching was like throwing water from buckets at rows of narrow necked bottles. It is not a bad illustration—some water will go in. So no doubt preaching to crowds will do good, but what is

wanted is not throwing water as referred to, but going down with a funnel and pouring it into each bottle. So we want more coming directly in contact with individuals. You remember how Elisha sent his staff to be laid upon Shunamite's dead child, but with no result until he himself came personally in contact with the child. Thus, many times we find that what our sermons will not do, personal effort will accomplish. And here let me say that I'm astonished how little parents do personally for their children. A few years ago a lady called on Mr. Gerrior and me where we were staying; when leaving she said: "Couldn't we have a word of prayer together?" and kneeling down she prayed for us finely. We thought it so good, and couldn't help speaking about her zeal and earnestness. A short time after I went to preach for her husband, a minister in neighbouring town, and was a day in the Manse. This I spoke to me about her family. Some of them were Christians, but she said that her youngest daughter was very fond of dress and society, indeed was quite worldly, and she wished I would try and get an opportunity of speaking to her. I said: "Do you speak to her yourself?" She replied, "Yes, I often say that I wish she would be different." But I said, "Did you never take her alone, and, talking and praying with her, try to arouse her to see her true position?" "No," she answered, "I never did." Does not our lack of personal effort explain much of our want of success in winning souls? Then, as in the other points, think of Christ's example. He commenced with personal effort at the Jordan, when he called Andrew and his friend. Among His longest recorded sermons are the ones to individuals; viz., to Nicodemus and the woman of Samaria. There we find Him

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going all the way across the lake to cure and save one man and leave him behind for a witness. And His last interview before His death was with an individual, viz., the thief on the cross.

*Lastly*, let us not only be saved, natural, earnest, plain and simple, with adaptation and personal effort in saving souls, but let us also be *steadfast*. "The world, the flesh and the devil, never take a holiday;" neither should we ever cease our efforts to save souls. Yet how spasmodic many are in Christian effort. I do not mean that we should necessarily have continuous meetings, but I do mean that we should be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." I heard a man say, "we want more steamboat and fewer sloop Christians." A sloop, as long as the wind blows, goes along all right, but now it is calm and she rides at anchor. A steamer waits for neither wind nor tide, but goes steadily on. Many professing Christians are quite active during the time of special meetings, etc., but as soon as they close, like the sloop without the wind, they cease too. Friends, let us be steamboat Christians! We need not all have the splash and dash of the side-wheeler if our work and temperament incline us to be more silent and reserved like the propellor, but which ever we are, like both we should be steadfast. Christ's illustration was "a well of water *springing up*," and how well in His own life we have it exemplified.

Now I trust that many of us are making up our minds to save souls. Just as sure as we are the Devil will do all in his power to hinder us. I used to be greatly discouraged after a special determination and effort in this direction. It



seemed that immediately I had peculiar temptations and discouragements. I mentioned this to a friend who asked me if I knew how the pirates used to do. They would be outside of a harbour watching the craft as they came out. Here comes a ship in ballast—she is allowed to pass unmolested. A small craft also passes untouched. But here comes a well laden merchantman, and out the pirates sail to seize and plunder her. As long as a person is careless and indifferent about saving souls, and don't amount to anything in Christian work, Satan don't trouble them much ; but just let us arouse and be likely to be worth something, and Satan will do his best to discourage and hinder. May we "by all means save some," and "wise to win souls," and to "convert many from the error of their way," may we "shine as the stars, for ever and ever."—AMEN.



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## SOME CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES.

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"And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Mideanite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you ; come thou with us and we will do thee good ; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.

And he said unto him, I will not go ; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

And he said, leave us not, I pray thee ; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.

And it shall be if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same same will we do unto thee.—Numbers x. : 29-32."

[ DO not believe that Canaan typifies Heaven only ; in fact it's doubtful whether it does so at all. If it does, are we to make mistakes, fight and conquer enemies, etc., in Heaven ? Yet in Hebrews iv. there is evidently a double reference from the land of Canaan, one of which is to Heaven. The other is the rest which Canaan best typifies, viz., the rest of faith—the being dead, risen and seated with Christ in the heavenlies. Canaan, then, represents the place in which it is our privilege to dwell even now, "blest with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies." Here, by faith, we can sing with the poet :—

"I've reached the land of corn and wine,  
And all its riches freely mine.  
Here shines undimmed one blissful day,  
For all my night has passed away."

It was unbelief that kept the children of Israel in the wilderness and out of Canaan. So unbelief gives God's people now a wilderness experience instead of the "fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." With this much explanation to prevent misunderstanding, I shall take this partially as an accommodation text, from which to say some things especially to Christians, which we have not said in former talks.

Often, after we have spoken as by God's grace we are now going to do, people say, "that's too much ; no one can live now like that." I always remind them of the time that the standard-bearer during the battle, rushed away ahead of the soldiers. They shouted, "Bring back the standard." He answered, "No, bring up the soldiers to the standard." Now, friends, am I to lower God's standard, or are you to come up to it ?

The *first* thing on the surface of this lesson is that *all God's people should be inviters*. Moses invited, yea, plead with his father-in-law to go along with him to the promised land. So all on the way to Heaven should be inviting and pleading with others to accompany them. But as we have spoken about Christian work in former talks I leave this to remark : in the *second* place, that *Christians should be free*. These people had been slaves, but were now a redeemed and free people on their way to Canaan ; redeemed by blood and freed by the power of God. Egyptian bondage then we take to represent the bondage of sin, whether in the shape of "the word, the flesh or the Devil." From this bondage Christ died to deliver us. As I go from place to place and meet people of all churches, I'm more and more convinced that

many professing Christians are *Hemiopiaists*. Hemiopia is an affection of the eye, in which one sees only one-half of the object. There is an authentic case of a famous man who only saw one-half the person whom he met. Reading the sign Johnson he only saw —son. Now, many seem to see only one-half the Gospel, or one-half Gospel texts. How many read II. COR. V.—21.—GAL. I.—4.—I. PETER II.—24. and all such passages, and see only one-half the truth taught! They read and see, “for he hath made him, who knew no sin to be sin for us;” “who gave himself for our sins;” “who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree;” and say, “isn’t it grand? Christ died for our sins; we have a substitute—and its so simple—all you have to do is *trust*.” All this is gloriously true, but so is what is taught in the other half of these verses. Where it says, “He was made sin for us, *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*;” “who gave himself for our sins, *that he might deliver us from this present evil world*.” And “he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, *that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness*.” This part many do not see, viz., that Christ died, not only to free us *in* our sins, but also *from* our sins.

And this freedom we should have. We read, “this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” If eternal things by faith become more real to us than temporal things, we would be free from the world’s power. Again we read, “walk by the spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; but these are contrary, the one to the other, that ye may not do the things that ye would.”

Here, then, is taught us the way to be free from the flesh. This does not mean, as some ignorantly teach, that the flesh is to be *taken out* of us, but rather that by the spirit, we are to conquer it. Theodore Monod says if a man is drowning that the law of gravitation is dragging him to the bottom ; but if you throw him a life preserver and he puts it on, a new law, the law of floating bodies, is introduced, which frees him from the law of gravity. It does not take away the law of gravity, but practically frees him from it. So the apostle Paul says : "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus *makes me free* from the law of sin and death." God grant us so to walk by the spirit, that we shall be free.

Once more we read James iv.-7 : "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you."—I. Peter v. : 8-9. "Resist the Devil in the faith."—Ephs. vi. : 16, (R. V.) "Withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one." Here, there is set before us the possibility of freedom from Satan. How many he has in bondage. Major Whittle relates an incident which came under his own observation, that illustrates what I mean. After the release of the slaves in the Southern States by the Proclamation of President Lincoln, many of the slave owners in out of the way places still kept their slaves in bondage. A coloured woman was taken before the Provost General charged with having attempted to shoot her master. Her story, corroborated by witnesses, was something like this : "Word came to our plantation that we were free. Massa here said that we were not free, and made us go to work harder than ever. After a while my little girl, on a neighbouring plantation, got sick, and I asked

Massa to let me visit her. He refused, but I made up my mind that I would go, and so started down the lane. If I did, Massa here ran to head me off, and pointing his revolver at me, said: 'Go home, or I will shoot you.' Now I believed that Massa Lincoln did set us free, and jumping at Massa here I knock him down, and grasping him by the throat I choked him, and taking the pistol from him I pointed it at him and said: 'Go home or I'll shoot *you*.' Whittle says that the Union soldiers who were present cheered her heartily. Now, friends, could a poor negro woman, on the strength of a man's proclamation, assert her liberty and resist her old master; and can we not believe God, accept our freedom, and "resist the Devil?" God then has made provision that His people should be free from "the world, the flesh and the Devil."

In the *third* place, *Christians should be separate*. These people were not only free, but they had come out and were separate—and God had received them as his own people. So we are commanded to separate ourselves. "Come out and be ye *separate*, saith the Lord." But how many of God's children are so mixed up with sin and the world, that you can scarcely tell them from unsaved sinners. I was once assisting a young man in some meetings in a place where he had been for some months. I asked him one day, who of those attending the services were Christian. He said, "I don't know, I have not seen the church roll yet." Now is it not too true that often there is so little difference that you have to go to the lists to see who are Christians? I urge you to be separate; *first*, because you would *do more good*. In fact, unless you are separate you are doing harm.

It's awful how our young men and women are stumbling over worldly professors. How often we hear, "Oh, if that's your religion I don't want it." I tell you professors, if you are not willing to "come out" from sin you should "go out" of the church.

Then, as to doing good, this is the only way. I know many are sincere in thinking that its not best to be too stiff and conscientious in many things, but to make concessions and be liberal so that you may win others. I'm sure this is a deception. If you go with the world to try and win them, the fact is that they think they are getting you, and you lose your influence with them, and really have nothing to which to win them.

In the *second* place, separation is the *happiest* life. It is often said, and is true, that many people have only enough religion to make them miserable. They often come to me and ask, "Is it right to go here and go there? Will a Christian dance, read novels, go to the theatre, smoke, etc.?" I always pity such professors. I never met a joyous Christian yet who was not a *separate* one from even doubtful things. But how many Christians who have had joy and peace, have lost it by mixing with the world. Harry Moorhouse used to tell of a canary he had, which was a beautiful singer. He thought it would be nice to hang it in a clump of trees near the house, and doing so for some time, it got with the outside birds, lost its singing, and could only chirp. How many Christians who were once full of praise and song, have lost it by want of separation!

In the *third* place, separation is *safest*. So many people are trying just how near they can go to the edge of perdition

without tumbling in. As Guy Pearse says, "Christ is a mere fire-escape." "Lord save me at last," is their prayer. To say the least, it is very dangerous; indeed, many would say that it is doubtful if such will be saved at all. If they are, it will certainly be "saved as by fire." One sees a splendid illustration of this kind of a Christian in a college. In order to pass, a student has to make a certain number of marks in each examination. The most that can be made is 100, but if one makes say 50, they will pass. Now, most of the students just want "to pass." I have seen them throw up their caps and shout when they saved themselves by two or three marks; indeed, to merely pass is the height of their ambition. However, in each class are a number of students who say it is possible to make 100, and they burn the midnight oil and study their utmost, and frequently they accomplish it. Now, how many professing Christians seem to be satisfied if they simply "pass," and how few are doing their best to make perfect marks! Certainly those so trying are safest.

"Trying to make the best of both worlds," is a common but awfully dangerous experiment. A man says, "I want to go to Heaven," and he joins the church. Now he has two hands; one religious and the other secular. The religious hand goes to church, says its prayers, etc., in fact, holds on to Christ. The secular hand is in the world, as busy as can be. From Monday to Saturday it is make, make—grab, grab—have a good time, etc. But along comes death; and all worldliness—indeed the secular hand lets go of everything, and grasping Christ now with both hands they soar to glory. Friends, it's a deception from Hell.



"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "Come out and be separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you."

In the fourth place, *Christians should be like travellers.* These people were strangers and pilgrims, journeying through the wilderness to the promised land. Christians are strangers in this world, travelling on to the better land—their heavenly home. As such they should be *cheerful*, for even amidst the trials and worries of life, the thought of a happy home in which part of "the family" is already gathered, should help to encourage and comfort.

Then they should be *contented*, and not have their affections set on things below. There would not be much use of the Israelites becoming very much attached to any particular spot, as the pillar might move at any time and call them to leave it. So Christians do not know the day nor the hour when their Lord shall come, to take them to be with himself. A Christian's treasure then should be in Heaven, and "where the treasure is there will the heart be also," and "from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Christians, therefore, as they journey on the way, will be found *thinking* and *talking* about Heaven—its prospects, pleasures, employments, and inhabitants. Are you so thinking and talking? I heard of a nobleman who had a fool; the kind that it took a smart man to be one. The nobleman died, and at "the wake" the friends gathered and sat in judgment on his character, and forgetting all the bad, and remembering only the good, they brought in a verdict that he had gone to Heaven. This is very common still. It is certainly kind of us after people are dead to speak so well of them, but it would be a good idea to have a little more over-looking of

faults and only seeing the virtues, while people live. Well, when this verdict was given, "the fool" spoke up and said, "I don't believe he has gone to Heaven." "Oh, my!" they exclaimed, "why do you think that?" He replied, "When my master was living he made a confidant of me, and used to talk to me about his affairs. Especially when going on a journey he would tell me, where he was going, what he was going for, how long he was likely to be away, etc. Now it's a strange thing to me if he went to Heaven, for *I never heard him say a word about it.*" How many people profess to be going to Heaven, and yet from one end of the week to the other you never hear it mentioned. I tell you honestly, it's nonsense. Why, if one of you are going to move "out West," there is quite a stir in your whole neighbourhood. Preparations are actively made, and it's the subject of much thought and conversation—and you are neither backward to advocate the claims of the new home, nor to ask others to accompany you. Here are scores professedly getting ready to move to the "far off home," and how little commotion or conversation it is causing.

In the *fifth* place, Christians should remember that Heaven is a *promised place*. Jesus said, "I go to prepare a *place* for you;" and we know where the place is, for He continued, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that *where I am there ye may be also.*" Heaven, then, is where Jesus is; and if you ask where He is, the answer is, "He is in Heaven." Someone has said, "The light of Heaven, is the *face* of Jesus; the joy of Heaven, is the *presence* of Jesus; the melody of Heaven, is the *name* of Jesus; the harmony of Heaven, is the

*praise* of Jesus ; the theme of Heaven, is the *work* of Jesus ; the employment of Heaven, is the *service* of Jesus ; the fullness of Heaven, is JESUS HIMSELF. Yes, Jesus makes Heaven.

Again, we have God's promise of Heaven, and our assurance of it rests on His *word*. "The Lord hath said." And what a blessed thing it is simply *to take God at His word*. So many seem to prefer some feeling, sign or experience. Now, I may be one of the soft-headed ones, but I confess that I'm resting upon God's Word for eternity. The way I understand it is this: At the present time my father is in California. Suppose I get a letter from him something like this: "San Francisco, etc.—Dear Son, having obtained good employment, and liking the climate very much, I have decided to make my home here. I wish you to come out at once. You will go to Boston, thence to New York, thence to Chicago, thence to Omaha, etc. Enclosed please find tickets, drafts, directions, etc. I will meet you at the depot.

Your affectionate Father,

—————"

I begin to get ready for this journey. You come into my house, and here is my trunk in the centre of the room, my books, etc., all lying about. You say "Halloo ! what's up—going away ?" "Yes," I say, "I'm going to California." "California !! where is that ? I never heard about it. Were you ever there ? Did you ever see it ? Do you feel it ? Now, look here, you are very foolish ; here you are comfortable and doing well, and you are rushing off blindly to a place you know nothing about ; indeed, there may be no such place at all—in fact, I'm doubtful if there——"

"Hold on," I say, "look here man," and I hold up my

father's letter. "Why, man, I've got a letter from my father, he is there and writes for me to come." I would take that letter, use those tickets, follow those directions, and expect, just as surely as I'm talking to you now, to step off the train at San Francisco and feel the grasp of my father's hand, and hear him say, "Welcome my son; I'm glad you have come." Yes, I may be a soft-head, but I have looked carefully into this and am convinced that the Bible is a message from God, and I'm fool enough to be accepting the blessings here offered, and by God's grace to be doing my best to follow its directions, and I expect that it will end in Heaven, where all those who thus live shall hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." God help you young men and women to be wise and to believe God!

Yes, friends, our hope is founded on the word of God. Heaven is a *place*, a *promised* place, a place *given*. "The Lord hath said, I will *give* it you." Like the rest of salvation, it is "*the gift of God*." Do you want it? Will you take it? You are welcome *right now*. Like Moses, I say, "Come with us." Perhaps you have a friend, a child, a parent there. Certainly you have a Saviour. Will you come? Now it is free; now you are invited; now you are welcome. To-morrow—well, I don't know anything about it—but I do know, that there is such a thing as putting off attending to this, until it is too late. When Mrs. Meikle and I were going to Winnipeg last spring, we left Chicago in the evening. I think there were four sleeping cars on the train; anyway they were all crowded. About nine or ten o'clock, the train stopped at a depot, and two gentlemen came

on board of our car, and we heard them ask the conductor for a berth. He said, "I'm sorry, but there's no room." The men made quite a fuss, saying, What are we to do? Where are we to sleep? etc. Just then a lady entered with the porter carrying her luggage, and these men made some remarks about her not being able to get a place, as there was no room. She said to the conductor, "What is the number of my berth?" He answered, "What is your name, please?" She told him, and looking at his book he said, "Your number is so and so." He then turned to the men, who were looking half annoyed and half amazed, and said, "This lady telegraphed ahead and had a berth secured." I tell you, unsaved soul, you better make preparation. You better telegraph ahead, as Heaven will be full before you get there personally—or what I like better than the telegraph, is the telephone. The central office is in Heaven, near God's throne—an instrument is in every man's heart. Friend, you need not shout—just whisper, or say it in your heart—"Lord I'll go," "I accept your gift," "Keep a place for me." God help you!

To the urgent invitation of Moses, Hobab answered: "I will *not* go." Are any of you making the same decision? You reply, "I never said *I will not*." You mean you never rose in a meeting and deliberately said so. But what have you said every time you have been invited all these years? By your actions, if not by your words, you have said, "I will not."

Moses continued to plead with Hobab, and so I continue to do with you. God grant that it may be with the same result, for as I close I have something to suggest, the

thought of which pleases, if it does not convince. It is that Hobab changed his mind and said, "I will," for we read afterwards that the children of this man were in the land with the people of God. Whether this is conclusive or not, it is certain that you may now *repent*. Hitherto you have said to all invitations, *I will not*. By God's grace, change your mind right now and say, "*I will*, God helping me, I'll go with you to Heaven." The Lord grant this decision to many for Jesus' sake!—AMEN.



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## RIGHT USES OF GOD'S LAW.

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"The law is good if a man use it lawfully."—1 TIM., i. : 8.

ONE of the *first* rightful uses of God's law is to teach us his *existence, personality and attributes*. In the world about us we see manifestly, the presence of a cause outside itself, and from the design and adaptation shown, we know that it must be an intelligent cause. No one believes, that if you throw a handful of type at a piece of paper, that *by chance* it will strike so as to form an intelligent and complete thought ; yet this is more likely, than that all the order and design in nature, is the result of mere chance.

We have then in nature, proof of the existence of at least an intelligent cause, which surely involves personality. However, it is when we come to the moral world, that we have this most clearly proven. Here we listen to, "thou shalt," and "thou shalt not." This is law. Law implies a Lawgiver and our consciousness tells us that this Lawgiver is a person, as we feel that we are called upon by this law, to conform our characters to the will of a perfect being. As it is then a revelation of the will of God, the law also teaches us the character of God, in his attributes of holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

In the *second* place, the law is rightly used, to impress us with the *majesty, glory and regal sovereignty* of God. The

law is not only binding on mankind, but being founded on the essential nature of God, must have reference also to all beings in the Universe. We know that God has myriads of beings, Angels, Cherubim, Seraphim, and for aught we know, many of the other worlds are inhabited. Look at that little cluster of stars in the constellation of Hercules; the telescope reveals that it is 30,000 worlds. Then look at the Milky Way with its 18,000,000 worlds. Remember also that many of the nebulae are being resolved under the telescope into other Milky Ways. Think of the glory and majesty of the One who says "thou shalt," and "thou shalt not," to all these worlds.

We read a good deal of the glory of Queen Victoria, on whose dominions the sun is said never to set. I heard a Missionary from India, describe the scene when she was crowned Empress of that country. He said that great numbers of native Kings, Princes, Rulers, etc. accompanied by their courts, with all the pomp and glitter characteristic of an eastern land, were gathered together, and seated on raised seats under a great canopy, presented an imposing appearance. At a given signal, the representative of the Queen, rode out in front of the assembled Potentates. They all arose, and taking their crowns from their heads, laid them along with their sceptres at the representative's feet, and amid the plaudits of the assembled multitude, "Victoria" was proclaimed, not only Queen of Great Britain and the dependencies, but also, Empress of India. As such she certainly has great majesty and glory; but then she is only one of earth's monarchs, for we have the President of the United States, the Czar of Russia, the Emperors of Germany



and China, etc., and with these she has to divide the honor and glory. But the One of whom we speak, is the "King of kings," the "Lord of lords," ay ! he is "the Lord God of Hosts." This has been explained as "God of battles ;" but most are now agreed that it means, in the words of Dr. J. A. Alexander, "Sovereign of the Stars,—material Hosts of Heaven, and of the angels their inhabitants." In view of this I feel it is only because as Paul says, we have to speak as men, that a comparison is allowable at all. Let us then join with Paul, when he says in this chapter : "now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory, for ever and ever.—AMEN."

In the *third* place, the law is rightly used *to restrain sinners*. The world is bad enough, but what would it be if there were no such restraint upon wicked men ? People often talk as if the churches were doing little good ; but burn them, and take away their exposition and enforcement of God's law and you will soon learn the benefit. Moody tells of a flippant young fellow who said to the Captain of a steamer that he was sorry he sailed with him, as there were so many Parsons on board. The Captain was not noted for his piety, and yet he answered : "Look here, young fellow, if you will show me a town without a Bible or its teachings, I will show you a place nearer Hell than any you were ever in." Yes friends, God's law restrains even sinners.

In the *fourth* place, *it is the standard of action for the saints*. They are not under the law as a covenant of works, but are under the covenant of grace, yet as Paul says, they are "under law to Christ." Christ "magnified the law, and

made it honourable." Grace does not "make void the law, it establishes it." Christ fulfilled the law for us as the condition of salvation, not in order to lower the standard, but "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us."

Now I come to the use of the law, for the brief exposition of which I chose this text. I believe we make a rightful use of the law to teach us God's existence, personality and attributes, and to impress us with His sovereign majesty and glory: I believe it is good to restrain sinners, and as a rule of action for saints; but in the *fifth* place, it is rightly used to *produce conviction of sin*. In the words of Scripture itself, "by the law is the knowledge of sin." This knowledge sinners must have if they are to be saved. God's people also need more of it. I'm sure that one great weakness of my early ministry was the want of laying what the old theologians called "a good law work." I ransacked my books and studied early and late, to get illustrations of the way of life. I flattered myself then, and yet believe that I often made it clear and simple. I see now however, that I was telling how to be saved to those who did not know they were lost. I was offering a cure to those who did not know they were sick; riches to those who did not know they were poor; deliverance to those who did not know they were captives; a Saviour to those who did not know they were sinners. I see more and more that the reason of much superficial religious experience and life in these times is owing to the want of "a good law work." Men have low ideas of some of the points already referred to, but above all they have low conceptions of "the sinfulness of sin."

To produce this conviction is then a great use of God's law. In Romans iii. : 19, we read : "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, *that every mouth may be stopped.*" One of the first things therefore that the law has to do is to *shut men's mouths*. If I should go among you and ask "Are you a Christian? One would say "No, but I'm just as good as lots that are!" Well friend your mouth is now closed. Another would say "I'm not saved, but I'm doing the best I can; I'm honest in business; I never hurt or injure anyone; and I believe I'll be all right." Your mouth is not stopped either, is it? The fact is that you unsaved sinners have far too much to say. The law has not done its first work in your case, viz: to shut your mouths. And not only so, but the above verse continues: "and that all the world may become *guilty* before God." Perhaps you have seen what this means at a law court. A criminal is brought before the judge, and as soon as he stands up he commences to talk. He says, "If the right man had been caught I'd not have been here. I'm an innocent man. I never did anything wrong in my life, but these policemen are such bad men," etc., etc. His mouth is not stopped, nor is he guilty before the judge. But here comes a poor fellow, and as he stands at the bar and hears the judge ask "guilty or not guilty?" his head falls upon his breast; he utters not a word; "his mouth is stopped, and he is *guilty.*" This is the position which God's laws must make sinners take.

If there is one here who has never sinned in "thought, word, or deed," I wish you would stand up. No one rises.

All feel that God's word is true when it says, "all have sinned." Yes, all have broken God's laws. Do you feel badly ; guilty about it ? If not, you should be ashamed of yourself. Suppose you have in your house a good intelligent dog. Some day you catch him stealing a chunk of beef and running away with it, and as soon as he sees you he drops it and sneaks off. You call "Come here ! come here quick, and look at the guilty brute." Yes, the *guilty* brute. That dog knows he has broken a law of your household, and he feels that he deserves to be punished. But how many of you have broken the laws of God for years, and yet you look, talk and act as if all were well. May God show you yourselves, and shut your mouths as guilty sinners in his sight !

Again Paul says in Romans vii. : 7-13, "What shall we say then ? Is the law sin ? God forbid ! Nay I had not *known* sin but by the law, for without the law sin was dead, and the commandment which was to life I found to be unto death. Was then that which is good made death unto me ? God forbid ! But sin that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful." As I understand this, it is, as if a person had a disease but was ignorant of it, indeed, thought they were all right, until the doctor came and gave medicine, and showed them their true condition. Now would this prove the doctor bad, although he brought the knowledge of disease and even gave medicine to develop it ? So the law comes and finds us thinking we are all right, but it soon shows us we are wrong, and the more we attempt to follow its directions the worse we get ; "Sin becomes exceedingly sinful."

If this be the teaching of Romans and other parts of God's word as to one important use of the law, how is it that there is so little knowledge or conviction of sin? *First*, because men do not come to "the law" to study its requirements, and to conform themselves to its standard. Instead of this they "measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves." When the question is asked "are you saved?" the hearer, instead of looking to God's law, the standard, looks to others and says, "I'm not as bad as some and I'm better than others." How foolish this is! You know that we have a law of weights and measures. The standard of each is kept at Ottawa, and an inspector is appointed for certain sections to examine and certify all such. Suppose he is coming around, and a certain merchant wonders if his weights and measures, will stand the test. To satisfy himself he visits two or three neighbouring stores, and compares his with theirs. The inspector comes and asks to see and examine them. The merchant says, "They are all right, I've compared and measured with quite a number of others." Would this satisfy the inspector? or has he to try them by the standard? Now how many, when the question arises as to whether they are right, or will stand the test when Christ comes, at once commence to compare and measure themselves with others, instead of comparing and measuring themselves by God's standard—His holy law.

Even when they do come to the law, they lower its requirements or so overlook its spirit that they are not deeply convinced of sin. They say, "I do not commit any of the wicked deeds here condemned. I am not a murderer

or an adulterer." Such forget that God sees and takes knowledge not only of acts, but also of thought and states of mind. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, distinctly taught, that a man does not require to commit the act to be guilty of violating the law, but that if he has the thought in his heart he is already guilty. A man does not need to kill his neighbour to be a murderer, "but whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause is in danger of the judgment," "and whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."

Others come to God's law and say, "I know I'm guilty of breaking some of these commandments, but I keep most of them," and thus they are little convinced of sin. Such forget the Scripture that says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not *in all things* which are written in the book of the law to do them," (Gal. iii. : 10,) or "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend *in one point*, he is *guilty of all*." (James ii. : 10.) These passages teach that if any one is to be saved by the law, it must be by keeping it perfectly. One violation is as bad as a thousand. This statement meets with as ready and universal denial as any I know. Over and over I hear people say, "I don't believe a word of it; I'm not as bad as so and so." No one said you were. What we say is that so far as salvation is concerned, the man who breaks the law once will perish the same as the man who breaks it a million times. If one wheel of my watch is broken it gets out of harmony with the standard time as if all were broken. So the man who violates one of God's commandments gets out of harmony with God's mind and will, as if he had violated all. "Love is the fulfilment of

the law." If a man therefore "love God with all his heart and soul, and strength, and mind, and his neighbour as himself," he is in harmony with God's law, and will be saved. Otherwise, he is short of the standard and must be lost.

To illustrate further let me remind you that the word used oftenest for sin in the Old Testament and the word translated sin in the New Testament means "to miss the mark." We read in Judges of "700 men who could sling stones at an hair breadth and not miss." Suppose all of us are drawn up in a line to sling stones at a mark. To strike this mark is perfection. We all try. A few come very near it, say within fractions of an inch; some miss it fractions of a foot; while others do not strike near it at all. So far as perfection is concerned "there is no difference." All have "missed the mark." Now is not this just what God's word says? "*There is no difference*, for all have sinned and *come short* of the glory of God." This does not mean that so-called moral people do not make better members of society than reprobates, but it does mean that so far as being saved or lost is concerned, "there is no difference."

As already remarked, many object to this doctrine so clearly taught in God's word, and in true christian experience. They show plainly that they have a wrong idea of the nature of sin. They say "it is only one sin," forgetting that this is enough to shut the soul from Heaven. I heard the late Dr. A. A. Hodge illustrate it thus: A man comes to you and poking a stick in your eye blinds you. You exclaim, "Oh my, you have put out my eye!" He answers,

"What's the difference, it was only *one* poke!" But wouldn't one put out the eye the same as a thousand? Now some of you say "only one sin," but remember that will put out your moral eye the same as a thousand. God has many commandments, but only one law; the law of love. To violate this law is to sin, and God hates sin. How many times did the angels sin who were put out of Heaven? Just once! How many times did our first parents sin, who were driven out of Paradise? Just once! Friends, sin must be an awful thing in God's sight, whether we see it or not.

Yes, people do not know the true nature of sin, nor do they think of the perfection of God's law. If you go into the Mint at Philadelphia, you will be shown through by paid officials, who will explain the different processes, from smelting to packing for shipment. One of the first things likely to impress you is the amount of silver, and perhaps gold, which is in sight. Here it is in piles like pig iron. Another thing likely to attract your special attention, is the floor in one of the departments. It is full of small holes, so that all the metal that sticks to the men's shoes is shaken off and goes through the floor, and once a year they gather it up, and get thousands of dollars. As you are about to pass out a thought which may arise is, how do they know whether any money is stolen here or not. If you ask the guide he will lead you to a window and show you a pair of scales, and will tell you that those scales weigh five tons, and they are so nicely adjusted that a piece of paper an inch square will tip them. When the material is taken in it is all weighed, and again when it is sent out, so that they



know if the least grain is missing. Just think what perfect scales man can make and adjust. Indeed, they have them so sensitive that if you balance them with two pieces of paper, and then write your name on one piece, it is sufficient to tip them. But think of God's balance, and the time when you will be weighed in it, and if one particle of conformity to God's law is missing, He will say, "Weighed in the balance and found wanting." How I pray that God's law may even now lead to "the knowledge of sin," and so convict that "sin may become exceedingly sinful."

Certainly this is required, not only for sinners but for God's people. It's simply awful the way many talk and act about sin and the law. If men are caught in this place openly breaking the laws, how many of you laugh about it? How many say when they are brought before the magistrate, "Let them off, there is no use being too strict, besides we are kind-hearted people and do not wish to see anyone suffer?" Such talk would horrify any well balanced mind that wishes the public good. Yet when it comes to the violation of God's laws how plausible such talk seems. Some of you belong to a Society. You have certain laws and penalties. Someone breaks one of these laws, but instead of enforcing the penalty you say, "Well, we better overlook it; he didn't break all the laws, and what is the difference anyway!" "Oh," you say, "stop—indeed we don't do that, the laws must be kept, and the penalties enforced, or our Society would be in disorder and go down." Yes, you can see the necessity of having laws and enforcing them in the country or in your Society, but you have been breaking the laws of God all your life, and you think there

should not be a word said about it. I repeat, it's simply awful the way people talk and act about God's law and sin. Sin is now by many called "weakness," "can't help it," "unfortunate infirmity," etc. God says "sin is lawlessness." The law is based on God's nature ; to make light of sin then is surely to make light of God Himself. Who is prepared to do this ? Those who are ready to continue in sin.

Here is God—His law, its penalty. Either the violation of this law is an awful thing, or God is unrighteous. I read in a paper the report of a police court, in which a man was fined 25cts. Now, if I read in the same paper that a man was hanged on the gallows, I would argue that the man who was fined 25cts. didn't do much, while the man who was hanged committed a great crime, or the judges were unrighteous. We reason the badness of the deed from the penalty. "The wages of sin is death"—death temporal, death eternal. Therefore, either sin is worse than most think or acknowledge, or God is not righteous. Which conclusion would you sooner accept ? You do not believe that God is unrighteous ; then believe and know that sin is awful. By the penalty of the law is the knowledge of sin.

I know that many, as they hear of the law and its penalty, have hard feelings toward God. I heard an illustration years ago which greatly helped me in this matter. It was a story told by Bro. John Grierson at a street meeting, of two boys who went to school and played together in their early years. As they grew up their ways parted. One became good, the other bad ; one went from one position to another till he became a judge, the other went on in wickedness till he became a criminal. In process of time they met as judge

and criminal. The people of the town where the Court was held, knew the circumstances, and the place was crowded to see what the judge would do with his old playmate and friend. The witnesses were heard, the lawyers argued, and now the judge is to pronounce sentence. The case is very plain against the prisoner, and the judge condemns him to pay a heavy fine. As he does so the people hissed: "Shame! to condemn his old chum." But they were too fast, for no sooner does he pass the sentence than he throws off all the insignia of office, and rushing down to the prisoner, he throws his arms about him and says, "My dear old friend, you were guilty, and as a righteous judge dispensing the law of the land, I had to condemn you; but now as a private citizen I can pay the fine, which I gladly do." Isn't that it? Man sinned—God, as the righteous judge of the Universe, had to say, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Some people talk as if God had only this spec of a world. As referred to at the beginning, God is the moral Governor of the Universe, and as such had to condemn sin. But, friends, don't hiss—don't go away with hard feelings. Look a moment—the sentence has gone forth—but who is that lying aside his regal and judicial glory? Who is it than in the manger at Bethlehem? in Galilee without a place to lay His head? in Gethsemane sweating, as it were, drops of blood? in the judgment hall insulted, bruised, bleeding, scourged? on Calvary with nails in His hands and in His feet? Who is it! You know who it is. It is "God manifest in the flesh, it is God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself"—paying by His own life and death the penalty due our sins.

This leads me in the *last* place to say that the law is rightly used *to lead to Christ*. In Galatians III., 24 and 25, we read, "The law is our schoolmaster, to lead to Christ." I know that this may refer primarily to the ceremonial law, the symbols and types of which pointed and led to Christ. However, the law of which we have been speaking also leads to Christ. To repeat a figure already used, the good physician comes, not only to discover and develop the disease, but also to apply a remedy. Two doctors visit you while you have an acute disease. One says pleasantly, "There is not much the matter with you—take a little medicine, and especially take care of yourself, and you will be all right." The other says, "Your life is threatened—urgent and immediate means must be used. I must lance and blister to save your life." Which of these would you call your friend? Now I pray that the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to convince of sin, and whose instrument is God's holy law, may take his sword and here and now pierce many hearts! You will praise Him for it. You may think it severe treatment, but when you come to see that He shows you that you are lost, that you may be found; that you are a sinner, that you may have a Saviour; that you have broken God's law and deserve its penalty, to lead you to one who never broke it, and paid the penalty for you; when I say you see all this, you will worship and adore.

A story is told of a poor slave, who, when dying, sent for his master. This man had been very bad to him, but as soon as he entered the room, the dying slave reached out his hands and grasping the master's right hand, lavished kisses upon it. The man was confounded. What could this

mean! "Why," he said, "this is the hand I struck and lashed you with. "Yes," answered the slave, "and that is why I kiss it. If this hand had not made me sad and miserable I might have been dying without hope, but it made my life so bitter that I was led to Christ, and now I die in peace." Come sinner and make a right use of God's law. It was never intended to save you any more than a mirror was intended to cleanse you. You use the mirror to see your need of cleansing, or to lead you to use water. So God's law, as James says, is a mirror, that you may see yourself as God sees you, and thus be led to go to Christ for cleansing. Do you see your need? Will you go to Christ? Will you go now? God help you.—AMEN.



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## SOME PHOTOGRAPHS.

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II. KINGS v. : 1—19.\*

IN these verses we have quite a number of pictures. I wish I were a word-painter so that I could show you them as I see them. However, many of you have good imaginative and descriptive powers which I wish you to use, and if you see a picture anything like yourself I want you to take it home and frame it for future reference. But I fear many of you will act like a fellow in Germany. He was arrested for a crime and would not tell his name. The authorities, therefore, took him to a photographer to have his picture taken that they might send it over the country and have him identified. However, the scheme failed, for as soon as they would go to take him he would screw up his face and squirm in such a way that they couldn't get anything like him. Now, how many of you will allow God's word to take your picture that you may see yourself as God sees you?

The first person here mentioned gives us three pictures, viz., Naaman—a picture of the *sinner*, of the *seeker*, and of the *saved*. As a picture of the *sinner*, look at his name,

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\* Read these verses.

character, position and condition. His name means pleasantness from a root meaning sweet, pleasant, lovely, suggesting something beautiful about his early life or appearance. In character he was patriotic and brave—"a mighty man in valour." I think he was also kind, and generous and considerate, from the high esteem in which he was held by his servants. And although he was proud and passionate, yet he was a man of good judgment, who could be approached and reasoned with. As to his position it was an enviable one. He was General of the Syrian army—a favourite with the king and popular with the people, "for by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria;" indeed he seems to have been Prime Minister of the Realm. Look at this picture: riches, honour, prosperity, position, power—with many good personal qualities; *but*—and now comes his true condition—"but he was a leper." How the picture is changed! As we first looked upon it many envied. Now, as Bishop Hall says, "The meanest slave would not change skins with him,"—a man suffering with one of the most loathsome and dreadful diseases.

Now, friends, look at some of yourselves—amiable, educated, moving in good society, respected and admired, *but*—an unsaved sinner. Others holding good positions, influential and rich, enjoying popularity and comforts, *but*—uncleansed sinners. Here then, we have the analogy between a person with *leprosy* and a person in *sin*. A leper may be a very nice, clean-skinned, beautiful child, at least so I have been told by those who have seen the children of lepers in the East. Soon, however, spots appear; the disease developes; the child is a loathsome leper. Do we

not often see this about us? Look at that pretty, pure babe! An artist paints it to represent "innocence"—years roll on and he copies that same face to picture "the prodigal!"

But if I am to take other pictures, I must not continue the analogy. The loathsome, incurable disease of leprosy, with its burdensome and trying results and regulations symbolizes sin. It is, as Trench says, "The sickness of sicknesses taken to represent sin." In the talk on the Law we had the guilt, or liability to punishment, element of sin, with its condemning power because of the Justice of God. Here we have brought out the nature of sin as against the Holiness of God, in its pollution and defilement, a separating from Him for ever.

The only point I wish to emphasize is the one that "there is no difference." You young ladies do not believe this. You understand how these young men, who stand around the corners, chewing tobacco, swearing, drinking, etc., are lost sinners; but you are of a good family—go to Sabbath School—don't do anything wicked, etc. So with some of you so-called moral men. You are good members of society—supporters of the church—leaders in commerce, art, literature, politics, etc., and you can't see that "there is no difference" between you and the inmates of the penitentiaries.

Well, look at leprosy as an illustration. If you read the 13th chapter of Leviticus, in which is given the law for the discernment of leprosy, you will find that the disease did not require to cover all the skin for a man to be unclean, but that *one unmistakable spot* separated him from the people. And so it is with sin. You do not need to be



given up to all kinds of it in order to be separated from God. One sin is enough. Indeed, if you read the 12th and 13th verses of this chapter you will find that the man who was found *covered* with leprosy which had turned white was pronounced *clean*, while, as we have seen, the man who had only one spot was *unclean*. In the former case the disease had evidently run its course—indeed we have something very similar to this in small-pox—while in the latter it still manifested activity by spreading. Now, whatever is the explanation of this, it is a fact that the out-and-out sinner stands a better chance of being saved than the so-called moral person. Jesus said that the publicans and harlots would enter Heaven rather than the Pharisees. And when a person is ready to acknowledge that God's description of them is true and that "from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in them but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores," they are not far from cleansing; for Jesus came not to call the *righteous*—those that are "doing their best"—"not as bad as others"—the so-called moral people—but *sinner*s to repentance. A person then has to take the sinner's place to claim the sinner's Saviour.

Again, those who do not see that "there is no difference" so far as salvation is concerned, do not take God's testimony about sin. If I send a piece of paper to all in this meeting and ask you to write a list of sins, commencing with the greatest, I'm sure that most would begin with M-U-R-D-E-R—yes, this is thought an awful crime. If a man happens to kill another his whole family are disgraced. You do not wish to see your children with the family of a murderer. We not only hang the man but we virtually separate his family from society.

Now turn to Prov. vi. : 16, where one of God's lists of sin occurs. It reads, "These six things doth the Lord hate, yea, seven are an abomination unto Him,—A PROUD LOOK !" What a change ! Some of you people strut about all fixed up, with your heads in the air as if you were made of different clay from other people. And how these proud people are courted and flattered. "I'd like to be introduced to Mrs. so-and-so," "to get them in our set." I tell you, friends, there will be a great change at the judgment. "God's thoughts are not our thoughts."

Then look at the next thing—"a *lying tongue*." "Oh it was only a little white lie !" We get a new name for some sins, but God says, "All liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth."

Then comes "*hands that shed innocent blood*." God hates murder, but He classes it with sins which are lightly spoken about and little thought of among men.

"*Wicked imaginations*"—not deeds at all but the thought of evil—"feet that be swift in running to mischief." "A false witness that speaketh lies." *He that soweth discord among his neighbours.*" How do you busybodies, tattlers, and gossipers like to be classed with liars and murderers ? Yes, there will be a big change at the judgment.

One leprous spot shows the nature of all—one sin shows the nature of all—one person shows the character of all. I wish you people who pride yourselves on your family, society, church connection and attendance, would study Cain. He was certainly of the first family, moved in the best society and was wonderfully careful of church

ordinances. But look what kind of a heart he had with it all, viz., a *murderer's* heart. And that's the kind of a heart you have unsaved sinner. The question is not as to the kind, number, and extent, of your sin as compared with others, it is, have you sinned? Have you one leprous spot? This shows the presence of the disease, and all it requires to fully develop is time and opportunity.

The question of sin is not one of *quantity* but of *quality*—not one of degree or size but of nature. Suppose you stand by a river to toss stones into it. First you pick up one you can scarcely lift, and throwing it upon the water down to the bottom it goes. Then you pick up another which you can hold between your thumb and finger, and snapping it out upon the water, down to the bottom it goes. So far as sinking is concerned, "there is no difference." They are both stone—have the same nature—although one is larger than the other. Now one person may be a great deal bigger sinner than another, but they have the same sinful nature, and so far as sinking into Hell is concerned, "there is no difference" if both stand on their own merit.

This so-termed morality, or as it should be called, self-righteousness, is a wretched thing and very, very common. Most here who are not Christians, and some who profess to be Christians, are full of it. I do pray that you may see a picture of yourself. If a person goes this evening to some of the gutters, and picking up a lot of old clouts and wrapping them about his body, walks down the aisle of the church here, all covered in this fashion, and turns about to the congregation and says, "Look at me; ain't I nice?" "Oh, you wretched, filthy creature!! Come quickly, some-

body, and put him out." But he says, "I've been all evening fixing myself up, and have done my best to be fit to appear before you." What would you think of such a scene as this? I know some of you think it a little coarse. Well, I can't help it, and if some of you would see yourselves as God sees you, you would say that after all it is but a faint representation. Besides I have scripture for it. In Isaiah lxiv. : 6, we read, "We are all as an *unclean* thing and all our *righteousness* (notice it is not our bad deeds but our prayers, alms, etc., apart from Jesus Christ) are as *filthy rags*." Unsaved and self-righteous sinners, take this picture and look at it, till you see yourself as God sees you. Lord convince of sin!

The *second* picture is that of the little girl; a lesson of usefulness, earnestness and forgiveness under trying circumstances. Here was a poor little girl in a strange land, a slave and a waiting maid, yet she embraces the opportunity of using her knowledge for the cleansing of her master. I'm afraid most of us would find in such a position a good excuse for doing nothing, especially as her act involved so much forgiveness. A band of Syrian soldiers had gone out on a pillaging expedition. They came to this little girl's home—perhaps burned the property and killed her parents. Anyway they carried her off as a captive, and as we have seen, made her a servant-maid in Naaman's house. She might have argued, "I know who could cure this man, but he is general of the soldiers who have used me so badly, and here I am a slave in his house, I'll let him die in his leprosy." However, she had the spirit of Christ, the coming Messiah, and forgave and helped her enemy. How many of us have this spirit? Are like this picture?

The *third* picture is the King of Syria. He hears of the hope for his favourite general and says in his kingly show-off style, as we would expect from what we know of Benhadad, "Go to—go and *I* will send a letter," and sitting down, after the customary formulas, he wrote, "Now, when this letter is come unto thee, behold I have therewith sent Naaman, my servant, to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy." I think it is likely, also, that he had something to do with the immense amount of wealth, which Naaman took along with him with which to pay for his cure. Then follows quickly the picture of the King of Israel in his fright—pretended zeal for God's honor and especially his ignorance.

What strikes me most about these kings, is their *ignorance*. The King of Syria addressed his letter to the King of Israel, instead of to Elisha, and also thought a cure could be bought. His ignorance is partly excusable, but here is the King of Israel reading another man's letter (Elisha's) and not knowing it. Now I suppose that these Kings, and Naaman too, were among the most intelligent men of their countries, yet all put together did not know as much about God's prophet as the little waiting maid in Naaman's house.

In this we have a picture of some who are here now. One is a good mechanic—well versed in all that pertains to his trade; another is a very clever professional man—a leader in his calling; a third is a very shrewd and successful business man, but all put together do not know as much about salvation, or the way to obtain it, as some little girl in the Sabbath School. What a lot of nonsense

one hears. A man thinks because he is a clever lawyer, a skilful physician, a smart mechanic or a shrewd business man, that he knows everything. Now friend, if it were a matter pertaining to your calling, which you have studied and know something about, I would take your opinion, but as a general thing, when it comes to religion, you men do not know what you are talking about.

What do you think of the woman in a town where we were conducting services? Her husband came to the meetings, was convinced of sin, and went home one night feeling very badly, being burdened and pained. He mentioned to his wife the load and pain at his heart, and she went off and made a big mustard-plaster and put it on him. Now you may laugh at this woman, but I have heard men of standing in their vocations, express opinions and state views showing just as little knowledge of how a man is to be relieved of his sins.

With all the books and preaching, men are perishing for the want of knowledge. It reminds me of what some of the sailors who got off the steamer *Atlantic*, told Mr. Gerrior. She was wrecked on our coast and was sinking—a rope was gotten to the land, along which passengers and sailors passed to the shore. These sailors said that they passed people on the rope, who were lost on account of ignorance. The poor souls were pushing their hands along the rope: they would push one hand a little way and then the other up to it, and so on, until exhausted, they dropped to rise no more; while the sailors who knew how to climb, came along hand-over-hand and safely reached the shore. Lord, give us knowledge and grace, to use it aright!

The next picture is Elisha. What a fine spirit he showed, to send a message to the king who should have known enough to send to him. And how conscientiously and impartially he acts towards Naaman. A true Israelite would not willingly go near a leper. Although the great General was at the door, Elisha does not run out, but sends his servant. My ! what fussing, bowing, and scraping there is these times to the so-called aristocracy. Yes, even in the churches and in these meetings. How little man has changed since the Bible was written. James describes graphically what we often see at the present time. "If there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment ; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing and say unto him 'sit thou here in a good place,' and say to the poor, 'stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool,' are ye not then partial?" Isn't that exactly it ? Here is a crowded meeting—Mr. & Mrs. "Common-people" come in—they look—wait—and finally have to stand ; but now Mr. and Mrs. "Big-folk" appear. What a stir ! "Come this way, please," "make room there," and likely they find a seat on the platform, some good Brother having vacated his place for them. Lord, take this abominable partiality out of us all !

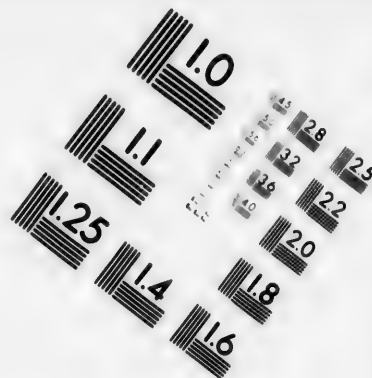
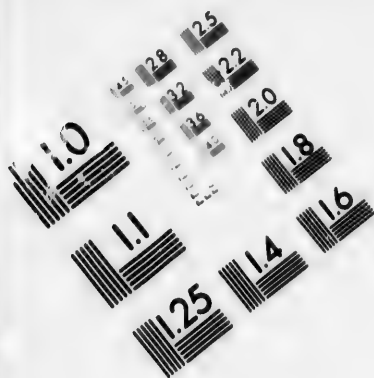
Then follows the picture of Naaman the *Seeker*. He came down to Samaria, with all the pomp and dignity of a king, and after the unsuccessful visit to the King of Israel, he comes to Elisha, driving up to the door with his horses and chariot. The most prominent feature in what follows is his pre-conceived plan springing from and mingled with pride and ignorance. Naaman was proud of himself and of

his country, and the cure prescribed did not flatter either, but above all it was against what he had planned and even pictured to himself. "*I thought*—he will surely come out to *me* and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God and strike his hand over the place and recover the leper." You see, as they say, he had it "down fine" as to how it was to be, and when he heard, and that from a servant, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times," not only was his personal pride wounded and his pre-conceived plan frustrated, but his patriotism was aroused for he exclaimed, "Are not Abana and Pharper, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?"

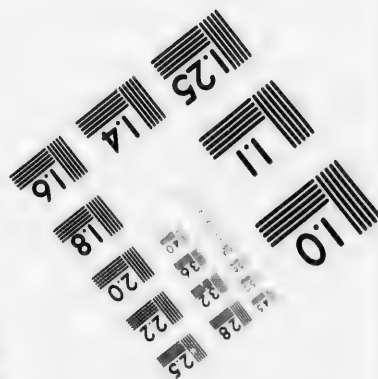
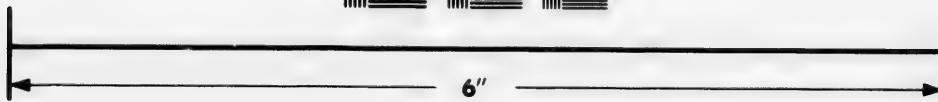
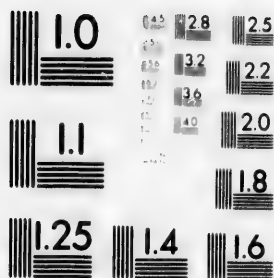
Now the key to all this is—" *I thought*." How many say this same thing—"well *I thought* if I would ever be a christian that I'd have to feel something." "*I thought* some mysterious change would come over me." "*I thought* if a person does their best and tries to be good that they will be all right." But look friends it's not what you *think* nor what I *think*, it's what *God says*, and He says, "*believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Indeed more and more I see that true religion is coming to the Bible, giving up all our own thoughts and taking God's thoughts. He says "My thoughts are not your thoughts for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my thoughts than your thoughts."

A man in our town professed to be converted and it was reported that he was "out of his mind,"—he heard this and the next time he testified he said: "They say I've gone out of my mind. I hope I have and that I have gone into God's





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mind." Friends that's it! God's thoughts are not our thoughts about Himself, ourselves, our sins, or the way of salvation.

That which perhaps troubled Naaman more than anything else was the *simplicity* of the remedy. Anyway his servants in remonstrating with him said, "If he had bidden thee do some *great thing* wouldst thou not have done it?" And this very thing troubles many now. Over and over after telling the way of life I have heard, "Is that all? why that's too simple!" If I had authority to-night to promise eternal life to all who would crawl ten times around the outside of this church, what a number would be willing to do it; but simply to *believe God's word*, is too simple. Or if salvation could be purchased how many would willingly work to earn money and like Naaman bring silver and gold; but to accept it as a *gift* is too easy.

Isn't it like God to have it simple? If you called in physicians one of whom was noted for his wisdom and skill which would you expect to cure you most simply? Wouldn't wisdom at once know the trouble and prescribe the simplest remedy? Or if your child was ill and there were two ways of curing it, one complicated, the other simple, which way would love choose? Certainly the simplest. So I see the wisdom and love of God shown in the way of salvation. If we had to know and understand as much; or do the things that many of you think, there would be no salvation for most of the world. Your way would shut out children and aged people—ignorant and poor people—thank God His way suits all—God asks faith in His Word—in His Son, and this all can have—must have—Naaman had to impli-

citly obey God's prophet. He suggested other rivers but had to go to Jordan or die in his leprosy. Now when people are told to *trust* Christ they suggest repentance, prayer, good works, or some other substitute. Friends if you want salvation you must do what God's Word commands ; believe in Christ—trust Christ—simply this—nothing else—nothing less.

A lady went to her minister and said : " I'm anxious about my soul, what shall I do ? " " Why," he answered, " you don't understand it, you have nothing to do—it's all done—Christ did it for you—almost his last words were ' It is finished.' You have simply to trust or rest upon the finished work of Christ. To those who asked, ' What must we do to work the works of God ? ' Jesus answered, ' This is the work of God that ye *believe*.' " But she *thought she* must be earnest and pray, &c. He urged her to give up all her own ideas and efforts and obey God by accepting and trusting His Son. However, she went home determined to pray and seek God. Accordingly, she went to her room and going on her knees, resolved not to leave till she was saved. The story goes that she fell asleep and dreamed. She thought she fell over a precipice, and as she went down she grasped and held on to a protruding twig thus hanging between life and death. While thus situated, she thought she heard a voice away down beneath saying tenderly and earnestly, " Let go the twig and I'll catch you," " let go the twig and I'll catch you." It seemed to be the voice of Jesus, and then awakening, she saw what she was doing. She was holding on to the twig of her own ideas and efforts, instead of letting go all and trusting Christ. And

this is faith : letting go all and trusting Christ. It's so simple, I'm afraid many are stumbling over it.

Mr. Gerrior relates an incident to illustrate faith, which is both amusing and instructive. He was staying in a house where there was a little boy called Philo with whom he became great friends. One day he took Philo on his knee, facing him and putting his arms about him said, "fall back and I'll catch you." The little fellow pushed himself back till he felt he was over balancing, and then suddenly grasped Mr. Gerrior, who said, "Try it again," which he did with the same result. Then Mr. Gerrior said, "Don't be afraid ; shut your eyes this time and I'll certainly catch you." Once more the little fellow tried it, this time with closed eyes ; but as soon as he found himself going over, he caught a hold of Mr. Gerrior. Then he jumped off his knee and bringing a chair put it before him, and going to a lounge he got a pillow, which he placed upon the chair, and when he had it all fixed he said, "Now, Mr. Gerrior, me'll do it." How much this is like sinners ! God says, trust me—let go and I'll catch you,—“underneath and about you, will be the everlasting arms.” And you answer, “Lord, give more feeling and I'll do it.” “Show me a sign or something else than your Word to fall upon and I'll do it.” May the Lord forgive you ! Why can't you trust Him ? He means what He says. Faith, as the poet says, “places it's foot upon the naked void and finds the solid rock beneath.” Sinner let go. Throw yourself upon God's promises, and just as sure as perfect obedience brought cleansing to Naaman, so will it bring forgiveness and cleansing to you.

The last picture is that of "Naaman, the *Saved*." What a change has come over him! Instead of the proud, haughty General who drove up in style to Elisha's door, "he returned to the man of God and came and *stood* before him," like a humble man as he now was. Instead, too, of the self-opinionated and self-contented seeker saying "*I thought* he would come *to me*," he now testifies of his assurance in God by saying, "Now I *know* that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel."

Again, look at the change in his *conscience*. Formerly he bowed in the temple of Rimmon without compunction; now his conscience is purged, and he wishes for advice and guidance.

Besides, he is not *ashamed* of his profession, for he asks for "two mules burden of earth" to take away with him. He was not ashamed to carry his religion with him. What good tokens of being a new creature, viz., humility, confidence in God, a purged conscience, an open profession, and lastly gratitude. How many of us who profess to be saved have these evidences? Each one is worthy of extended notice, but there remains time to refer to the last one only, viz., gratitude.

Naaman expressed his gratitude not only in words, but was ready and anxious to show it by deeds. He asked—he urged Elisha to take a present. How much of this spirit do we manifest? What was cleansing from leprosy compared with our cleansing from sin? How many of us, like the lepers in the New Testament forget to return to give thanks to Jesus! I'm sure He often has to say, "Were there not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?" What a mean

thing ingratitude is! It's a wonder when we hate it so much in others, that we tolerate so much of it in ourselves. A story is told of a rich man who was choked by gas. The doctors said that if anyone would give some of their blood, his life might be saved. A poor man bared his arm and was bled, and some of his blood injected into the dying man, which proved his salvation. When he recovered and learned what the man had done, how much do you think he was grateful? He gave him five dollars. Let us not condemn this man lest we condemn ourselves. We say that we are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, therefore we are not our own, nor is anything we have ours. How many of us live thus, "not in word only, but in deed and in truth?"

And now in closing let me make an appeal on the ground of gratitude to those who are not christians. It always seems to me that this should be a strong motive to induce sinners to accept Christ. A story that stirred me as much as anything I ever heard was one told by a minister of a young man in England. He was a student in one of the universities and took a high position in his studies. When he graduated, after studying for the ministry, he had good offers to settle down, but determined to go as a foreign missionary. Friends urged him to remain at home. They reminded him of the society, comforts, &c., which he was sacrificing. However he was determined and went to the East. One of the first things on his arrival to attract his attention was a Lazaretto. Here poor lepers are enclosed and a rehearsal of their misery and suffering is heart-rending while a description of their diseased and awful condition is

scarcely fit to be repeated. There they were—virtually dying by inches with this loathsome and disgusting disease. But what does this man do? With all his culture and refinement—with his possibilities for society and comfort at home—he enters one of these Lazarettos to spend his life in telling these poor souls of cleansing from sin. Friends this is no imaginary picture. Doesn't it stir your heart? What a noble self-sacrificing life! But sinner I have something far more wonderful to tell you, and I'm certain it is true. The Lord Jesus Christ dwelt in heaven—He was “the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person.” “Who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself—taking the form of a servant being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea—the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2 : 6-8, R. V.) “Though he was rich yet for our sakes he became poor.” Yes, friends, Jesus had position, riches and glory, but He left all and came to this world of sin. Think a moment of a perfectly holy being living in this world. What comparison between a good man in a Lazaretto and a holy God in a world of sin; and not only here but suffering and dying to save sinners—yes to save *you*! Oh sinner, do be like the young woman in one of our towns. She was going to cross the harbor and the tide being low she had to go down steps which were slippery. As she went she slipped and fell into the water. A band of young men who were standing on the wharf ran to rescue her. One fine, stalwart fellow outran the others and as he dashed down the steps his feet



slipped too—his head struck—he went into the water and was taken out dead. After a little while the young woman was rescued, and being resuscitated and seeing the young man lying over on the wharf she said,—“What ! what does this mean ?” On being told she rushed over and with dishevelled hair and piercing cry, she bent over the dead form and said—“Oh friends, did he die for me ! did he die for me !” Come brother, come sister, here is Jesus weeping—scourged—crucified—dead, will not you say, was it for me ? was it for me ? Yes, thank God, for you ! Will you take him ? Will you trust him ? Right now ! God help you. Amen and Amen.



## THE ONLY SURE FOUNDATION.

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"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—I. COR. ii : 11.

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."—ISA. xxviii : 16.

IN these texts we have Christ set forth as a foundation. This, of course, is a symbol, and one of the remarkable things about the Bible, is the amount of symbolical language employed. All the realms of nature are visited, and from each, figures are taken to set forth Christ and His salvation. In this we see clearly the love of God—"not willing that any should perish." Are we hungry and thirsty? Jesus is "the bread" and "water of life." Are we wandering and straying away? He is "a Shepherd." Are we pursued and distressed? He is "a refuge"—"a fortress." The vegetable kingdom is visited, and He is "the Rose of Sharon," "the Lily of the Valley." The animal kingdom, and He is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The Heaven's and He is "the Bright and Morning Star."

Then there are figures taken from almost every condition and relationship in life. In the Scriptures He is known by 255 titles—that is, salvation is set before us in 255 different aspects. Have we seen Him in any of these? If not, God

grant that to-night we may see Him as the *Foundation* on which we can safely rest and build for time and eternity.

The children here understand this figure. Some day as you are on your way to school, you see men digging in the ground, and you wonder what they are doing. On your way home you see that it is a trench, but as they proceed, you find that it is joined by others—indeed, they are digging to “lay a foundation.” You are anxious to know what kind of a house they are going to build. Is it to be wooden or stone? For whom is it? etc. Yes, every one knows when they see a foundation, that it is for to rest or build something upon.

How careful people are about the foundation of their structures. In the cities you will see them digging down and down, to reach a solid foundation. Sometimes they go down, forty or fifty feet,—indeed I know one case where they went one hundred and ten feet below the surface of the water, before they reached the rock, on which to build a bridge; and if they can't reach the rock they often break up stone or metal and pour hot lime upon it; or in some way cement it together until they form a solid bottom of concrete on which to build, or as doubtless you have seen them do, they drive piles till a solid foundation is formed. Yes, men are very careful about the foundations upon which they erect their structures.

Especially, are people earnest and anxious about what they rest upon themselves. Some years ago where we were holding meetings the hall became very much crowded, and a report was circulated that it was not safe. Do you think we could get the people into that hall? No, indeed! we had to

hold the first service outside, and the after-meeting in the hall. Well, friends, you all know that we are erecting a structure—building up a body—a mind—a character—a soul. Are you anxious and careful what it is resting upon? or are we going ahead heedless as to whether we are building upon shifting sand or upon the solid rock?—regardless of your foundation while our text says, “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ.”

And not only are we careful about the foundation of our buildings, but certain considerations make us more careful. We generally consider who is to occupy the building, hence see the care taken with palaces for royalty, parliament buildings, etc. But, especially do we consider and exercise care according to the time the building is to last. Sometimes, when a great Evangelist visits a place a structure is put up for the occasion, and taken down on his departure. About the foundation of this building little trouble is taken. But now we are going to erect a memorial building, a structure for the use and admiration of future generations. What care we then exercise about the foundation. Think who is to occupy the building you are erecting—the Lord of Glory. And consider, too, the length of time it is to last. May God help us all to examine well what we are building upon, for our text says, “other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Let me remind you again, that a building's value and stability depend greatly on the security of the foundation. From the costly nature of making a good foundation on unsuitable soil, contractors are often tempted to save expenses, by allowing a bad foundation—thus many buildings

have fallen, causing destruction of life and property. Not long ago in New York, a building when nearing completion, suddenly fell, killing some of the workmen and some who were passing. An investigation showed that the builder had slighted the foundation, and you know a building is no stronger than its foundation. How careful this should make us to seek earnestly, that when the testing time comes we all may be found upon "the sure and only foundation."

This text implies that people will attempt to lay foundations for themselves—and how often they do. Some rest upon their experience. Some years or months ago, they had such and such a change—they had this or that feeling—they heard a voice—saw a vision—or some such thing. Part of this may be all right, while some of it is nonsense ; but as to making it a foundation to rest our safety for eternity upon, it is all alike useless. Another says, "I'm not trusting to my experience, but I want to be sure that I have true faith." Supposing you were sure of this, would you rest upon it ? Do we rest upon our faith ? or is faith a receiving and resting upon the foundation ?

But while many attempt to rest on these and similar things, most try to build a foundation out of "good works." There are whole systems built on this foundation. I was once at a so-called place of worship. The preacher commenced to tell the people how to be saved. He said, "Now it's not hard—God does not ask impossibilities. Would you take your donkey, and putting Mount Lucas upon him, (a range of hills near the town) tell him to draw it ? It would be nonsense. Now God does not ask you to do what you cannot do. There are in this

church, certain ordinances to be attended to on certain days, accompanied by certain expenses, &c., &c. Those of you who wish to be saved, have only to attend strictly to these matters that all may be well." Surely this was *another* foundation. How much better is what some of you trust! Many seem to think if they are good blue Presbyterians; or belong to the active, warm-hearted Methodist Church; or are enrolled as members of the Baptist Church; or attend to the observances of the Episcopal Church, etc., that they will be all right. May the Lord take from under all, every false prop, that we may rest fully and only on Christ, for "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

The late Dr. Hodge told us about a poor Hindoo who got troubled and anxious about his soul. I think the Dr. said it happened when he was in India. Anyway the man's conscience was troubling him, and he came to the Hindoo priest and said, "What must I do?" He answered, "You go home and say Ram, &c., (naming some Hindoo gods) and you will be all right." The poor fellow obeyed and soon returned, saying, "I'm not right yet." The priest said, "Go and measure with your body the distance between two places—naming two cities a good distance apart. He started off, laid himself down in the dust, made a mark, rose up and laid himself down again, and so on, till he measured the whole distance. Again he returned and said, "I'm not better yet." "Well," said the priest, "I'll tell you this time what will certainly cure you. Go to the Ganges, and at that specially sacred spot where the River Jumna enters into it, there wash and all will be well." A third time the

poor Hindoo started off, but before long he was back and with the sacred water dripping from his clothes, he said, "I'm not right yet." Poor, dear fellow ! how my heart bled for him. To think of a fellow-being muttering the name of heathen gods, measuring distances with his body, or going down into a river to wash away the sin of his soul. Don't you pity him ? Now take care that some of you are not trusting in something just as useless. Is it your prayers, your alms giving, your church attendance, or any good works ? If so, be wise and listen to God's Word in the text, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Notice it *is* laid. This leads us to the second text, viz., Isa. xxviii. : 16, " Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation. He that believeth shall not make haste."

"*I lay for a foundation.*" God knew we required something to rest upon, so He Himself laid it for us. If we could have laid it ourselves He would not have done it. Our salvation then is all from God. And being laid by God, this foundation is sufficient. Isn't it blasphemous for anyone alongside of, "thus saith the Lord God I lay for a foundation," to say, if not in words, at least by actions, that they too must lay a foundation ?

"*I lay for a foundation a stone.*" Of all good foundation material, stone is the cheapest. If a foundation were gold or diamonds, we would not expect it to be very extensive. We have here, then, the idea of the freeness and largeness of the foundation. "Whosoever will" may rest upon it, and as some one has well said, "it is big enough

for all mankind to stand upon." Then in stone, we have the idea of durability. We read in our Bibles of the "Rock of Ages," and also that "Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

"I lay for a foundation a stone, *a tried stone*." Even in laying earthly foundations, we like to know that it is of "tried stone." How men search and test the stone they choose. When the British nation wanted a stone for their new parliament buildings, about the beginning of this century, they appointed a committee to select it, and their report contains an exhaustive account of the building-stone of the British Islands. Stone has to be tried as to its compactness, hardness, insolubility in water, its alteration in the atmosphere, etc ; besides, it has to be tested as to its use in different localities. Thus, a stone which is good in the country decays under the atmosphere of a city. How Jesus, the stone which God laid, has been tried ! Men in all times, conditions and circumstances have tried it. The Patriarchs, the Priests, the Prophets, the Martyrs and the Missionaries—the Apostles and the Early Christians tried it. Mechanics and merchants—soldiers and sailors have tried it. The old and young—the rich and poor—the ignorant and learned have tried it. It has been tried in the storm and in the calm—in sickness and in health—in life and in death. And not only have good men tried it ; but look at the tests to which it has been subjected by bad men—yes, and devils have in this sense tried it ; indeed, may it not be said to have been tried by God Himself ?

I have heard people exhorted to come and try Christ anyway, and if He did not prove all that was reported they



would be no worse off. I don't believe in that method of appeal. This foundation is no experiment—it is a “tried stone.” It is amusing to hear some people talk about these things. A few years ago in a town of Western Canada, I was present at a meeting where an opportunity was given to talk personally to those who had remained. I turned to a young man behind me and said, “There don't seem to be very many young men Christians in this town.” “Oh no!” he answered, “we know too much to believe this theory. Religion may be good enough for old women and soft-headed men, but we don't take any stock in it.” Now I thought this was straight talk, and pretty hard on a good many people I knew, not to speak of myself, so I continued, “Do you read the Montreal papers?” “Oh, yes!” “Have you been reading them lately?” “Yes.” “Well I expect you know what is going on there now?” “I suppose you refer to the meeting of the British Scientific Association.” “That is just what I mean, have you been reading the reports?” I continued. “No, he said, I have not.” “Well, you should,” I replied; “and look here, young man, if you had read the papers carefully, you would have received, not only a good deal of information about modern inventions and recent scientific research, but you would also have learned that quite a number of the members, and not a few of them leading-ones, among them our own Sir William Dawson, meet every morning in a private room an hour before the regular Association meetings, and opening and reading out of an old book called the Bible, they also sing praises and pray to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, young man, is the leading scientific man of Canada—is Sir William

Dawson an old woman, or a soft-headed man?" Friends, I know not how you feel, but such talk as is common among young men, is disgusting to me. Some of them, who never saw the outside of a college or read a scientific book in their lives, sweep away the whole structure of Christianity with a few cant infidel sayings. Thank God they can't do it—it is a *tried* stone. I heard something interesting lately about the writing of "Ben Hur." The author of this very popular book, Lew Wallace, was one of the leading Generals in the Northern army during the late civil war in the United States. In conversation with Colonel Robert Ingersoll the latter said, "Look here Wallace, if you look carefully into this Christianity, you will find there is nothing in it—it has no foundation to rest upon," &c., &c. After this conversation, General Lew Wallace got books, and made a careful study of Christianity, and as a result, wrote that now famous production, "Ben Hur," or "A Tale of the Christ," and I understand became a true Christian. Only the other day I read the following about Judson, the famous missionary to Burmah. He graduated from Brown University, an avowed skeptic. He and his greatest college chum wanted to write for the stage—Judson went to New York to study "the stage," and after a brief stay, determined to ride on horse-back through a number of the New England States. He put up one night at an Inn, and heard in the next room the groans of a dying man. In the morning he asked about him, and found that he had died. On further inquiry the dead man proved to be his own college chum. He was staggered. His skepticism was shaken. He entered Andover, not as a divinity student,

but as a searcher for truth. He too looked into Christianity, and became not only a Christian, but the famous missionary. Now I need not multiply these instances. I believe the result is the same to every earnest, honest seeker. Christianity bears investigation, it is built on a "tried stone."

"*A precious corner stone.*"—Ancient corner stones were often very large, ornamental and useful—the most beautiful and important, in the structure. I'm not going to describe the greatness, preciousness, beauty and importance of Christ, the "chief corner stone," upon which the church is built, and upon which the believer rests. Nor do I need to, for "unto them who believe He is precious," to them also He is "the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." Indeed take Him away, and the church and the believer perish. He is truly their "all in all."

A precious corner stone, *a sure foundation*. Yes, a sure foundation. Even all stone as we have seen is not a sure foundation. The first Eddystone light-house was washed away in a storm, along with its architect. The next was burned down. The third had to be taken down and rebuilt on another part of the rock, because the stone on which it rested was worn and weakened. Here the superstructure proved more durable than the foundation, but we rest upon a tried stone—*a sure foundation*. As I heard an Evangelist say, "although we may often tremble and shake upon the foundation, thank God, the foundation will never wear nor move under us."

"He that *believeth* shall not make haste." "All men have not faith." Faith is receiving and resting upon Jesus Christ, the sure foundation. The want of this makes the difference

between saved and unsaved men. "He that believeth," and "he that believeth not," are Scriptural phrases; the one rests on the solid rock, the other on the shifting sand. Unsaved men often say, "I don't see any difference between myself and Christians." Now not to speak of the difference in thought and action during life, let me show you the difference when the testing time comes.

Changing a little an illustration of our Lord's, let us look at that pretty cottage over there to the right. The architecture is pleasing, it is nicely furnished, and has fine grounds about it. As we turn and look to the left, we see a cottage very similar to the first, in size, shape, colour, surroundings, etc. We exclaim, "how much they build their houses alike in this locality!" So it seems to outward appearance. Time passes on, until one night a great storm arises—the thunders roll—the lightnings flash—the rain pours—the wind blows. Truly it is an awful night. The man in the last described house hears the storm—arises from bed—lifts the window—and lo! the torrents are rushing down the mountain side, and dashing against his house—the foundation is washing away—the house is shaking—and getting ready to fall. "Children! children!" he cries—"awake! awake! let us haste for our lives—our foundation is going—our house is falling"—and out into the darkness and cold they *haste* to perish in the storm.

The man in the first described house hears the same noise—awakes, and looking out, sees similar torrents dashing against his house. His children also awaking, commence to cry and say, "Papa! Papa! what shall we do? let us *haste* to escape." "Be quiet, and lie still dears," he answers,—

“you need not fear, and there is no need to *make haste*. When I was building this house I took good care and placed it upon a rock—“a sure foundation.” Tell me is there no real difference between these? And tell me, is there no difference between the man who is upon Christ the sure foundation and the man who is not? Ah friends! it will not be long—the storm will arise—the testing time will come. Are you ready? Are you on the rock? “He that *believeth* shall not *make haste*.” I read of a young man who was washed ashore clinging to a plank. He proved to be the only survivor from a wrecked ship. A Missionary who was there spoke to him about his soul, endeavouring to draw lessons for his spiritual welfare from his temporal circumstances. He said, “you say that when the ship was sinking you jumped into the water, and, swimming to this plank, got upon it, and were held up from death until the winds and waves drove you ashore.” “Now, young friend,” continued the Missionary, “there is another storm coming, when you will require something to hold you up from sinking to death.” Thus tenderly and earnestly the man of God pointed the young sailor to Jesus, the only foundation—the only plank that could hold him up in the waters of death. Years passed away. The Missionary is in another part of the country. He approaches and enters a house. The inmates say, “hush! tread lightly as you enter the chamber of death.” The Missionary is shown into the room, and there lying on a bed in the waters of death, is the man whom years before he had pointed to Christ. The dying man looked up, and recognizing him, held out his hand, saying, with almost his expiring breath: “I’m on the plank and thank God it holds—thank God it holds.”

Friends, it will not be long—doubtless sooner than many of us expect. You are on the bed of death ; friends stand about you willing to do anything, but all they can do is to fan your fevered brow, and wet your parched lips. Now the Doctor comes—he stands by your bed side—holds your hands—looks into your eyes. We almost hold our breath to hear his words, and we watch his face, if possible to catch a gleam of hope. He drops your hand and says, “they are sinking.” *Sinking ! SINKING ! SINKING !* Brother, what will you rest upon ? Sister, are you upon the sure foundation ?

Poor John, the old stage-driver was dying. For many years he had driven the stage across the mountains. Many of you know how they brake the coaches by means of a lever, against which the driver presses his foot on a down grade, thus forcing the brake against the wheel. As poor John lay near his last, an attendant saw him put his foot outside the clothes, and work it as if feeling for something. They said, “What’s the matter John ?” The poor fellow answered, “I’m on a down grade and I’m feeling for the brake.” Sinner what will you do on the down grade ? What will you do as you feel the world slipping from underneath your feet ? What will you do as you are sinking ? “*Sinking !*” said dying man, who heard this whispered near his bed, “sinking !” “How can I *sink* through a rock ?” Thank God ! that’s it ! Come brother, come sister, step off your self-made rotten foundation, on to the sure foundation. Step off the sinking sand on to the solid rock. God help you to step right now, right now.—AMEN.

## JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD.

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"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—JOHN i. : 29.

IN this we have the language of symbol. Symbolical language is universal. Everyone can use and understand it. How kind then of God to have so much of it in the Bible. We referred briefly to this on a former occasion. Here also we have a symbol or type used through the Bible, from the time "Abel brought the firstlings of his flock," till John saw in Heaven "the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world."

John saw Jesus walking and said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John was a Jew and was talking to Jews. Now in order that we may understand this text, let us consider what would come into the minds of the people as John uttered these words. If we can find the meaning intended to be conveyed to them, we can learn the lesson it is meant to teach us.

For two thousand years these people had offered up sacrifices to God. Under the Mosaic ritual, these were arranged into the burnt, meat, peace, sin and trespass offerings. Each of these had its own peculiar meaning, but all are now fulfilled in Christ. We will only refer to certain features which they had in common.

*First*—When men sacrificed to God there had to be a *victim* to offer. What I mean is plainly shown in the story recorded in Genesis xxii. Abraham and Isaac arrived at the place where sacrifice was to be offered, and Isaac spake unto his father and said, "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the Lamb for a burnt offering?"—that is, where is the victim? Passing now to the application, a sacrifice has to be offered for the sins of the world. God's Justice has to be satisfied. It stands and exclaims, Where is the victim? We answer, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son." "He spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all." The Lord Jesus Christ is the "Lamb of God"—the victim for sacrifice.

*Second*—Not only must there be a victim to offer, but it must be a *living* offering. It must have life, and as "the life is in the blood" it must have blood. Turn again for illustration to Genesis iv. Two brothers came to sacrifice to God. The first was a farmer and "brought of the fruit of the ground." The second was a shepherd, and "brought of the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect." What made the difference between these offerings? Hebrews' says it was *faith*. I believe this means that Abel looked forward by faith to the great sacrifice promised, and therefore brought a living offering, while Cain thought "the fruit of the ground" would do. Now not only did he bring the fruit of that which had been *cursed*, but he brought a *lifeless* offering. It had no life, no blood, and "without the shedding of blood there is no remission," no forgiveness. What was in



Cain's offering to typify Christ, who alone gave efficacy to all the offerings? Can't you see that he was foolish to expect such an offering to be accepted? And yet how many "follow in the way of Cain." They bring God their prayers, their money, their good works. They say that if they are only earnest, and do the best they can, they hope to be all right. But what, I ask you, is going to take away your sins? Don't you see that there is no life, no blood, in your offering? And I can assure you it will not be accepted any more than Abel's. Oh friends, be wise! Be sure and bring a living offering. God has graciously provided this for you in His Son, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," for we read that when he came into the world a body was prepared for him, that he might have blood to offer as a sacrifice for sin. That this was to be so, had been clearly set forth for years, by the veil which we are told, represented the flesh of Christ. (Heb. x : 20.)

*Thirdly*—There must not only be a victim having life; but they were carefully warned that the offering was to be "without spot or blemish." If one bullock in the herd or one lamb in the flock was better than another, this was the one sacrificed. There was to be no reason at all in itself why it should die. How clearly we are told that Christ was "harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Man tried him. Even Satan could find nothing in him. He never committed one sin. There was no reason at all in Himself why He should die.

This living offering, in which there was no reason why it should die, was taken *and put to death*. Picture it to yourself. Here is a lamb—it is "without spot or blemish,"

—yet the innocent creature is taken and you see it slain and its blood flowing, until it is cold in death. What can this mean? It means, sinner, that God wants you right now to “behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” Look at Jesus who could say “which of you convinceth me of sin?” Look at him bruised, wounded, bleeding, dying, “led as a lamb to the slaughter.” Do you know what this means? It means that “the wages of sin is death,” and that Christ who never sinned, has taken the sinner’s place—died the sinner’s death. It means “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

A negro woman explaining the way of life said, “Me die, or He die—He die, me no die.” What theologian can explain it shorter or better? Someone had to die. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Christ died and we are now free. I want to make this so clear that we shall all see it. A common thing in sacrifices was the burning—indeed some of the sacrifices were all consumed by fire. Fire may mean cleansing or cursing. Here I take it to mean the latter, “nigh unto cursing whose end is to be burned.” Look a moment then at the burnt offering. Here is an innocent lamb, having a perfect life to offer, and it not only dies, but is burnt to ashes—made a curse. So it was with Christ. He not only died, but was made a curse, for it is written, “cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Paul explains this in Gal. iii. when he says, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” Who has perfectly kept all God’s law? Not one. We are all then by nature under the curse, but Christ took that curse, for “Cursed is every one that

hangeth on a tree." Identify then, sinner, the curse under which you are, with the curse under which Christ came. Don't you see? We are under the curse. Christ became a curse. "He hath redeemed us from the curse." We are free.

And now let us look at a few points in which the type (the Lamb), and the anti-type (Christ), do not agree. 1st. The Jew brought his own offering—this is "the Lamb of God." We see, therefore, that we could not save ourselves. "We are saved by grace." "It is the gift of God." "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Friends, salvation is all of God. 2nd. Being a Lamb of God's own providing, it must be all sufficient. One hears a great deal of parrot talk about Christ. People say "Yes, Jesus shed his blood for us, but"—and they then say things that show clearly that they do not know what they are talking about. Do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for you? "Yes, I do." And are you saved? "Oh, I would not like to say that." Well, let me tell you that you are using language without thought. You have read or heard some one say that, and like a parrot you repeat it. Why, friends, do you know what it means that Jesus died for us? How do we judge the value of a man's death? One way is by the dignity of his person. Some months ago small-pox was raging in Montreal. Hundreds were dying, yet we heard little about it. One morning the papers announced that Sir Francis Hincks was dead. What a change! the whole country was in a furore, and most stringent measures were adopted for staying the disease. This man was a leader in politics, commerce, etc., and

well-known, having held high positions in the country. It was the dignity of his position made the difference. Again, suppose that a man in common circumstances in London, suddenly dies to-day. A few friends will bury him, and a local paper may notice his death. At the same time the Prince of Wales dies. At once this is telegraphed over all the continents, and under every sea on the globe, and the papers will be filled with obituaries. Why is this? Perhaps the first was a better man in many ways than the Prince, but it is the latter's position, the dignity of his person that lends value to his death.

Now who was Jesus? I speak with reverence when I say that if He were a mere man His death had no more value than the death of any other Jew in like circumstances. If He were a mere Jew, His blood was no more precious than any other healthful Hebrew's. But He was not a mere man—a mere Jew. Friends, He was "the Son of God." Aye, He was "God Himself, manifest in the flesh." "God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Paul says, "they crucified the Lord of Glory," and there is an expression in Acts that I feel like saying very reverently, viz., "The Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood,"—the blood of God. Do any of you get a glimpse? Paul did when he said, "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?"

Think who He was, consider what He did, and believe for whom He did it, and can you doubt? Yes! the Lamb of God is all sufficient. A little boy was in the garden with his father. They were talking of Jesus. "I can't see Papa," said the little fellow, "how Jesus could die for everybody." There was a worm crawling on the ground, to which his father pointed and asked, "Do you think, Johnnie, that you are worth more than that worm?" "Oh, yes, Papa." "Well suppose that barrow was full of worms, or even that hill there was all worms, do you think you would be worth so many ground worms?" "Yes, Papa, I think I would." "Now look, my boy, you feel that as a creature with not only a body, but reason and soul, that you are worth all these worms, but remember that Jesus was not a creature—He was the Creator—He was God, and therefore, His blood, His death, can atone for the sin of the world—"He is the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

Then this offering differs, because unlike the others, it was offered "*once for all*." However we pass this to ask, how does this offering take away the sin of the world? We have already anticipated the answer, but it is so important that we return to it. One word gives the answer, viz., SUBSTITUTION. This is a big word for the children, but one that can easily be explained to them. A lady told me that while in India as a missionary—one day her little girl Gracie did something naughty and was to be punished. Now wasn't that right? Her brother Willie heard this and came to his mother and said—"Mamma, I wish you would whip me." "My child," she said, "you have

done nothing wrong." "No, but Gracie has, and if you whip me you need not whip her." "Well, Willie," the mother said, "if you really wish this, if you are willing to take Gracie's place, I'll do as you desire." So the mother whipped little Willie in the place of Gracie, that is, he was her *substitute*. Now turn to Isaiah liii. : 5, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed,"—that is, Jesus took the whipping that we might have peace.

An illustration of Substitution, which is often heard, is the story about the man drafted to the war, who did not care to go, because he had a family, etc. His young neighbor-friend offered to go in his place—went and was killed in a battle. After a little a second draft was made, and this man was again chosen. He said, "you can't take me, I'm dead. I died in my substitute." This story always seemed to me to be very defective, because I saw that the law had an equal claim on both men the first draft. However, I heard something from men in the U. S., who had experience in the matter, which I thought helped the illustration. Certain men during the rebellion did not wish, when drafted, to go to the war, but they had to go or provide a substitute. Many of these were rich men who would rather give thousands than leave home and business. If they got an American to go for them, they would give him \$500 or \$1,000; but if they could get a Foreigner they would give him perhaps, \$2,000 or \$3,000. Now why this difference? Because, if the American went and was killed, and another draft was made, the party might be drafted again; but if they got a Foreigner,

a man upon whom their law had no claim, to go for them, and he was killed, they could say if ever drafted again, "You can't take me, I'm dead." What a splendid illustration this makes it ! Where did Jesus come from ? Why from Heaven, the foreign land where the laws of earth had no claim upon him. He voluntarily assumed our place, became our Substitute, and now when the devil with the law comes to us, we can say, "I'm dead," "crucified with Christ," and "My life is hid with Christ in God."

Now, good as this illustration is, I know a better one from the Bible. As already referred to, Abraham and Isaac came to the place where they were to offer sacrifice to God. After building an altar and putting the wood in order, Abraham took Isaac and bound him upon the altar. Then he took a knife, and his hand was raised in the air to plunge it into the heart of his boy, when God called him. He then looked behind him, and saw "a ram caught by its horns in a thicket." He ran and led it up to the altar, and loosing Isaac, they took the ram and bound it upon the altar, and in the very words of Scripture, "offered him up for a burnt offering *in the stead* of his son." The knife that was raised to pierce Isaac, found its sheath in the ram, his substitute. In the words of the hymn :

" O Christ what burdens bowed thy head,  
Our load was laid on Thee :  
Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead,  
Did'st bear all ill for me.  
A victim led, Thy blood was shed ;  
Now there's no load for me."

"Jehovah bade His sword awake,  
 O Christ it woke 'gainst Thee !  
 Thy blood the flaming blade must slake ;  
 Thy heart its sheath must be.  
 All for my sake, my peace to make ;  
 Now sleeps that sword for me."

How simple ! how beautiful ! Do you all see it ? If not, listen on Substitution a moment longer.

An ancient way of killing people was by poisoning them. Thus Socrates was made to drink a cup of poisonous hemlock. Suppose that a lot of men are to die by this method—the poisonous cup is mixed, and as they stand in line to drink the cup of death, the Prince steps to the head of the line and says, "Let me drink, that these may go free." Would you understand that ? Then listen to a verse of Mrs. Cousin's which we omitted :

"Death and the curse were in the cup,  
 O Christ 'twas full for Thee !  
 But Thou hast drained the last dark drop,  
 'Tis empty now for me.  
 That bitter cup,—love drank it up :  
 Now blessing's draught for me."

Yes friends, Jesus prayed, "If it be possible let this cup pass, nevertheless not my will but thine be done." But it didn't pass, he drank it to the dregs, and now in his name I offer to all of you to-night "the cup of salvation," "the water of life." Will you take it ? Will you take it now ?

Notice what we are told to do ? "*Behold* the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Of course this does not mean with our bodily eyes, for we might see Christ and not be saved. Indeed we might touch him and not be



benefited. As He went along the way one time, scores thronged about Him, and a poor diseased woman pressed near Him, and managed to touch His garment. He turned and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" The disciples answered, "Thou seest the multitudes thronging Thee, and sayest Thou who touched me?" Yes He did, for one touch was so different from all the rest. Then the woman fell down before Him, and told him what she had done. He said, "daughter, thy *faith* hath made thee whole." Yes friends, you might not only see Christ, but come and shake hands with Him, and not be saved without the touch, the *look* of faith.

"*Look* unto me and be ye saved." I remember when anxious about my soul, how I tried to form pictures of Christ, that I might look upon him. I couldn't see that it meant "look to me," trust my word. You are in debt. A rich friend says, "Don't worry, just *look* to me for it." You would understand that, wouldn't you? Well that's what it is, *look* to Jesus, *trust* Jesus. How simple! how easy! how near! Will you do it?

What can be simpler than this idea of Substitution? What an awful thing it is going to be for some of you, who listen to these plain illustrations of this simple way of life. When you waken up and find that it was so simple, and yet that you have mis-seed it. A man was carried away in a flood. The current carried him along to a tree which was standing in the water. Into this tree he climbed, and for the time was safe. His friends on the shore were almost frantic. How could they reach him? What could be done to save him? They had no boats, and could devise no way. Evening

came, and he was still in the tree. As the night gathered they could hear his cries, but were helpless to render assistance. During the night the cries ceased, and when morning dawned, the tree stood empty. Chilled and fatigued, he had fallen and was gone forever. A man came along in the forenoon and heard the sad story. He said, "Why didn't you save him?" "Because we couldn't." "Yes you could, very simply. If you had made a raft, and placed it with a long rope attached, about the place where the man fell in, the current that carried him would certainly have carried the raft near enough for him to get upon it and be saved." How awful for friends to hear, when too late, a simple way by which they might have saved their loved one. But think when you are a lost soul, and hear. "Son, remember!" Remember the plain illustrations,—remember the simple way of life,—remember your opportunities. Oh, friends, will it not be awful! So plain—so easy—so simple, but too late—too late! "Oh if I only had! If I only had!" Brother, Sister, be wise, and even now "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

And *lastly*, we are told, "*He taketh away the sin of the world.*" Grand doctrine! Glorious news! But if you are going away believing this general truth only, I pity you with all my heart. There is something better for you than that Jesus put away "the sin of the world." Better! What can it be? It is that He put away *your* sins! And before this sermon closes I wish every one would make this personal application of the truth of the text. Unless you do, your knowledge is of no avail.

Several years ago I was assisting a brother in some meetings. We had after-meetings to talk personally with inquirers. Sometimes as we did this, others would sing softly a few appropriate hymns. As I went to a young lady who seemed very anxious, they were singing,

"I have heard of a Saviour's love,  
And a wonderful love it must be;  
But did He come down from above  
Out of love and compassion for me?  
Yes! yes! yes! for me, for me, etc."

I opened the Bible at Isa. liii., and reading, "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed," said, "Can you, by God's grace, change these plurals into the singular? Can't you say, 'He was wounded for *my* transgressions; He was bruised for *my* iniquities; the chastisement of *my* peace was upon Him, and with His stripes *I* am healed.'" It says here that "All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." By faith make it, "The Lord hath laid on Him *my* iniquities." She did not seem to be listening to me very closely, and as the singers came to the chorus she joined with them and sang in a strong, clear voice:

"Yes! yes! yes! for me—for me:  
Yes! yes! yes! for me.  
Our Lord from above, in His infinite love,  
On the cross died to save you and me."

I went back there two years after and found her a consistent, active member of the church. May God help us all to

make this salvation a personal thing, and right now to say with Paul, "He loved me and gave Himself for me!"

If you don't you will have part in the picture where they are calling on the rocks and mountains, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb." If you do you will be among those who have "Washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."



## DELUSIONS.

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"The wiles of the devil."—EPH. vi. : 11.

"We are not ignorant of his devices."—2 COR. ii. : 11.

A MAN said to Evangelist Finney that he did not believe there was a personal Devil. "It's easily seen," replied Finney, "that you never tried to get away from him." If any of you doubt that there is a Devil and that he is a *deceiver*, it's certain you never engaged much in personal Christian effort. After preaching more or less for over twelve years, nearly always having after-meetings to deal personally with those impressed, I'm certain not only that there is a Devil but that there are "wiles of the Devil," and I know some of his devices. Many talk and sing lightly and flippantly about the Devil. They cannot feel as Paul did in the passages above. In the first he is earnest, as Dr. Hodge renders it, "lest we should be *defrauded* by Satan." In the second he urges Christians "*to be strong in the Lord and put on all His armour*, to stand against the *wiles* of the Devil." He is well called "the deceiver," and his deceptions might be called "legion," for they are many.

The following are some of them: "*I'm too great a sinner.*" In nearly thirteen years experience I've not heard

this many times. The Devil is too old-fashioned to try to deceive many with this. He knows it is too easily answered. How my heart bounds when I hear these words from an anxious sinner. While in Newfoundland a poor fellow called me into a seat by myself, and, grasping my hand in a way I shall never forget, he said, "You don't know me. I'm an awfully hard case. I think I'm too bad. Is there hope for me?" "Why, dear brother," I said, "Don't you know that the worst man is in Heaven already?" Paul "was a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious." Indeed, he "consented," or, as it is, "thought well," of the murder of Stephen. He himself says, "Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." And, brother, look at "the thief on the cross," and listen to Isaiah i. : 18—"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." And that dear man saw the deception of thinking he was too bad, and he took the lost sinner's place and accepted the lost sinner's Saviour, and I have seldom seen such a changed man as he became, in appearance and action. Yes, friends, there is too much Scripture light on this point to meet it often as a "snare of the Devil."

"*I'm not sinner enough.*" This is a greater deception, and therefore much more common. I know about this from sad experience. Although I was a bad boy I didn't feel that I was such an *awful, awful* sinner at the time of my conversion. I have seen and felt it far more since. I thought I had found Christ and peace in Him, but when I heard a man rise in a meeting and say, "I tell you it was

awful. I saw my sins as a great dark cloud about the size of this church, and they went above my head and then came down upon it, and I felt myself sinking into hell, etc." I say when I heard such testimonies as this I used to fear that I had never seen matters right, and I often longed to be home till I would pray and make myself feel more of a sinner. Now where does the Bible say that before a man accepts Christ he has to feel that he is such an awful, awful sinner? Is it not enough, as the hymn says, "to feel our need of Him?" As I said on a former occasion, I believe in a good law work but I also believe that it is a deception of the Devil to stay away from Christ for more conviction. If you discover that you have a certain disease, are you going to wait till you feel worse and till it assumes its most malignant form before you apply to a physician? or does not the very presence of the disease warrant you in such an application?

*"I don't feel."* Those who say this mean —, well it's doubtful if they know just what they mean. They have an idea that they should have certain sensations or some vague, mysterious feeling come over them, and for this some kind of an experience they are waiting. Mr. Gerrior asked a lady near the close of one of our meetings "Are you a Christian." She said, "There was a lovely feeling came over me while you were singing that hymn, 'Almost persuaded.'" You know what a solemn, touching thing it is. "But have you accepted Christ?" he continued. "Oh, I wouldn't like to say that." She evidently expected some pleasant or soothing feelings instead of a personal Saviour. Now feelings are all right in their own place; but they are a result,

not a basis or ground of faith. Sam Jones' illustration is the best I know on this point. He says: "Suppose a man goes into a woods on a cold day to chop a tree down. He pulls off his coat, rolls up his sleeves, and leans himself up against the tree. You come along and say, 'Hallo, what are you doing?' 'I want to chop this tree down.' 'And why don't you do it?' 'I'm waiting till I sweat.' Now anyone can see the absurdity of this. If he would go to work he'd soon sweat. So if a sinner really accepts Christ, he will soon have all the feelings necessary. It's Jesus you want first, and not a lot of some kind of feelings.

*"But I have not the same experience as some whom I have heard or read about."* Here comes in the danger of biography and testimony. I believe our experiences differ according to our age, temperament, education, knowledge, etc.; also according to God's sovereign pleasure and purpose concerning us. So many want every one to feel just as they did, and if you don't, well they shake their heads dubiously. Let me illustrate. A woman once attended a prayer meeting by the side of a river. As the Evangelists, who were present, spoke, "the Lord opened her heart to attend to the things spoken." At the close of the meeting, she was baptized and immediately engaged in good works. It was all done quietly and orderly. Not long after, in connection with these same Evangelists, a man was converted. It took an earthquake to move him, and when he did get started, he became desperate, and was going to commit suicide. However, one Evangelist said, "Do thyself no harm." He exclaimed, "What, then, must I do?" "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," was the answer. He did this, and



that same hour was baptized. Shortly after this the Philippian jailor met Lydia, for the conversion of these two we have briefly described. "Well, sister Lydia, I hear you are a Christian." "Yes, thank God, brother, I am." "And when and how were you converted?" She replies, "I was at a little prayer meeting on Sabbath, and I made up my mind that Jesus was really the Messiah, and I determined in my heart to trust Him." "Why, sister, was there no earthquake?" "No." "And did you not feel so awfully bad that you were tempted to kill yourself?" "I can't say that I did." "Well, Lydia, I'm afraid that you don't know anything about it yet." This is certainly as reasonable as much of the talk we hear.

"*I'm not fit.*" No : nor you will never be. Don't you know the hymns we sing? "Just as I am," and "Take me as I am." The fact is, if a sinner don't come just as he is, he need not come at all. If you wait till you are as good as Mr. So-and-so, or up to your own idea of fitness, Christ can't save you, for "He came not to call the *righteous*, but *sinners* to repentance." If a rich man announces that he will feed all the hungry, and clothe all the ragged who come to him—if you were starving and naked, would you say, "I'm not fit ; I'll have to wait till I have eaten a little or fixed my clothes?" Why it's nonsense! Your very hunger and rags are your fitness—for if you wait till your hunger is satisfied, you will not go at all. And if you go well clothed the man will count you out of the class invited. Friend, your *unfitness* is your fitness. Oh! this self-righteousness! We hate to be entirely dependent on God. It's so hard to come just as we are, and to keep coming in the same spirit.

I remember when I came as a lost sinner, saying, "Take me as I am," and shortly after I came to the Lord's Table saying, "My only plea Christ died for me." "I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all, Jesus Christ is my all in all."

The next time the Lord spread His table I said, "I'll not go this time. I must get more earnest. I must speak and pray and live better, and the next time I'll be ready to go." The Lord showed me the deception. I wanted something in myself to commend me to God, instead of coming as at first,

"Without one plea  
But that His blood was shed for me,  
And that He bade me come."

"*I can't give up my old habits or the pleasures, etc., I'm enjoying.*" What an awful deception! Why, friend, you won't have to give them up if you come. You will get a new heart and you will want to give them up. You often see trees in the early spring with many old leaves clinging to their branches. The snows have fallen and the winds have blown, yet they tenaciously hold on. Soon the spring comes with its warmth and the sap begins to circulate. A new life, so to speak, is infused, and as it enters the buds, off go all the old leaves. Friends, that's it. Come and get the new life and you can throw off all the old habits and sins. I seldom urge sinners to give up this or that; I say "*Come and get.*" You, perhaps, know the old Greek myth about the Sirens who sat on the shores of the Mediterranean, and sang with such bewitching sweetness that all sailors who passed were allured, only to be killed. Ulysses managed to pass them by stuffing the ears of his

sailors with wax and lashing himself to a mast. The Argonauts are said to have passed, owing to the superior enchantments of the singing of Orpheus, whom they had on their ship. Now, sinner, try this latter method of breaking the allurements of sin. Come and get something more satisfactory and better suited for your nature. Come and accept the Lord Jesus Christ, and have true joy now, and be at God's right hand after a little, where "there are pleasures for evermore."

"*I intend to do better from this time.*" You mean that you are going to reform and live a better life. Suppose for the sake of argument that you do this, that from this moment you do not commit another sin. I ask you "What about the past?" "What about all the sins you have committed since childhood?" While in Halifax, Evangelist Pearse told a good story on this point. The affair occurred on a Cornish smuggler. She was pursued by a revenue cutter, and was likely to be caught and confiscated. Rather than risk this, the captain decided to throw all the cargo overboard, and thus deceive the pursuers if they did overtake them. Accordingly they went to work with a will. Out of the hold and into the sea went the goods as hard and as fast as they could. They knew that one box or bale would condemn them as much as a whole cargo. It must all go. Not a spec must be left to tell the tale. Sinner, you will find that too. If you are to escape by your reformation, it must be perfect. One sin remaining will tell on you and condemn you the same as all. The poor fellows are working for dear-life, and now they are nearly finished and send a boy aft to see if the cutter is

gaining on them. When lo! he comes rushing back aghast and says, "*It's all floating behind.*" Now, sinner, where are you going to put your past that God will not see it? You better come and take His own way. He will cast it for you "into the depths of the sea."

Another thing I have noticed about this reformation method is that although you get one sin driven out some more are likely to come right in, so that "the last state is worse than the first." The people of Jamaica were greatly troubled with ants which were devouring everything. They heard that Rifle ants would eat them up, so they sent and got them, and true enough the Rifle ants went to work and ate up the other ants; but alas! as soon as they were through with them they commenced to devour everything else. "Out of the frying pan into the fire." "The last state worse than the first." Don't you see, sinner-friend, self-righteousness may trouble you and be as bad in God's sight as your past sins?

"*I'm doing my best towards salvation!*" Do you mean your best to save yourself, or to assist God to save you? If you mean the latter, surely you can see that it is a deception of the devil to think that God requires your assistance. If the former, I trust you will see that you can't do anything towards salvation before you get it. The Bible does not say, "Work *for* your salvation;" it says, "Work *out* your own salvation." But how can you work it out before you accept or possess it? I heard Mr. Moody tell a story about himself that is so good I must repeat it. He said that when he first went to Boston a young fellow from the country he spent all his money and was expecting a letter

with some from home. He went to the post office and asked if there was anything for D. L. Moody. They said, "No." Before very long he was back again with the same result. He was so anxious for this letter that the time seemed long to him, so he was soon back again. The Post Master said sharply, "I thought I told you already there was nothing and that the mail would not be in for some hours." Moody felt the time awfully long, besides he had not a cent and was depending on getting money in the expected letter. Finally the time arrived, and hastening to the office he got a letter, and hurried to get alone to open it. It was from home—from his sister. She had been reading that pickpockets were very bad lately in Boston, and the letter was to warn him *to be careful of pickpockets*. But could they take from him what he didn't possess? Yes, just as easily as you can do anything towards salvation before you possess it.

*"I've tried religion and there is nothing in it."* To what straits the Devil must be pushed when he sets this snare! Yet I have heard over and over, "Oh, I've come through all this and have given it up." I think you mean that you have gone through certain forms or experiences, certain emotions, etc.; but you must know that true religion does not consist in these things however they may accompany it. Yet I believe some think they really once tried true religion and found it unsatisfactory. Such always remind me of a very severe disease that visited our town. It was a combination of scarlet fever and diphtheria, and all who took it died. After a little one citizen was said to have it but recovered. The question then arose as to

whether he had the *real* disease—the same as the others. It is always a question in my mind about those who have “tried this,” as to whether they ever truly had the real blessing. I’m afraid they are deceived.

“*There are so many things I can’t see through or understand.*” And you never have anything to do with what you can’t understand perfectly. Oh, no! Not you. I wish then, you would come at the close of this meeting and explain to me all about electricity. You can’t do it—yet you will use the telegraph and telephone to-morrow. But you never have anything to do with what you can’t understand perfectly, do you? If you follow this closely, your dealings with anything in this world will be very limited. Do you know what matter is, of which things about us are composed? Science answers that it is infinitesimally small atoms. But what are these atoms? Stuck again. Friends, let us be honest and consistent. If we can’t explain the things which are seen and temporal, how do we expect to know all about things which are unseen and eternal? I’m sure we know most about them and could prove it if necessary.

It seems such a deception for finite minds to carp and cavil, because they are not able to comprehend the Infinite. Because the child does not see and clearly understand all its parents thoughts and doings, is it going to refuse to have anything to do with them? It’s amusing to hear some men talk about God and His ways. If they only had the governing of the Universe, things would be in a very different condition. I think a good many would soon learn to acknowledge God’s ways as not so bad after all. I heard

of a man who found fault with God, because he had such big gourds growing on such small vines ; for example, pumpkins ; and such small things on large trees, e. g., acorns. It seems sometime after this that he went into a wood and fell asleep under an oak and was awakened by an acorn falling and striking him upon the head. He thought, what a fool I am, if it had been as I would have it, and pumpkins had been on the oak, my brains would have been knocked out. Yes, it's a pity some of you don't get a chance to run the world for a little while. We would have a big time.

And what wise-heads infidels are ! " They can't see this, and they can't understand the other thing"—" it's nonsense"—" impossible," etc., etc. ; but when common sense and judgment are used, their objections vanish. Especially is this so in regard to things they can't see and understand about the Bible. The whale couldn't swallow Jonah, because although such a big fish, it has a very small throat. Facts show that the Bible does not say that a whale swallowed him, it says, "*God prepared a great fish.*" And if it were a whale, surely God could prepare it. A man said to Evangelist Schiverea, " You don't believe all the Bible, do you ? " " Yes, I do," he answered. " Then you don't know much about science, for according to atmospheric research, it is proven that the higher you ascend the colder it gets, so that a man going up too far would freeze to death. Now the Bible says that Elijah went up to Heaven, which according to this would be impossible. You don't believe that story about Elijah, do you ? " " Of course I do," replied Schiverea, " for God says so, and besides you forget that the Bible says that God took Elijah up in a *chariot of fire.*"

And thus we could go through all the objections I have ever heard.

"*There are so many hypocrites in the church.*" Do you really think there are more hypocrites than sincere people? "I never saw a true Christian," says someone. Then all I have to say is, that you have kept very bad company all your life. The fact is, you get a hold of some weak or inconsistent Christians, and you hold them up and talk about them as if they were the whole church. Suppose you go into an orchard to test the fruit, and as you enter you pick up an apple from the ground and breaking it open, say, "Pshaw! this orchard grows rotten apples. I'll have nothing to do with it." But, friend, reach up and pluck one from the tree—one that is living, and a fair sample. So you pick up some miserable old hypocrite and examining him and not finding him sound, you say they are all frauds. Why don't you take some child of God who is living in close communion with Christ, the living vine, if you wish honestly to test Christians? Some one has well said, "If you really hate hypocrites so badly, make sure and go to Heaven, for there will not be one there, but don't for any sake go to Hell, for it will be chock full of them."

"*I have not decided yet.*" Yes, you have. There are only two sides, and if you are not on Christ's you are on the Devil's, and you have so far decided to remain there. There is no neutral ground. We are *for* or *against*; and whichever you are is your present decision.

"*God is merciful.*" One of the Devil's worst snares for it is a truth. However, he is keeping from your view that



he is also a God of justice and "will by no means clear the guilty."

"*I'm afraid I'll not hold out.*" Such a deception, when there is a divine Saviour who is "able to keep us from falling," and who "ever lives to intercede" and "save even to the uttermost."

"*I'm trying to repent.*" You mean to sorrow for sin, while repentance for you means, "change your mind"—"turn from sin to God." Truly their name is "legion!"

"*I have no time just now.*" What would you think of yourself if you said, "I have no time to love my mother;" "I have no time to be honest." Don't you see it's a deception! Religion is a life—a principle in the soul. Besides some of the busiest men who have ever lived, and many who are now living, have been sincere Christians.

This leads us to the last deception I shall mention. "I have no time now, *but I mean to sometime.*" So did every soul who heard the gospel as you do, who is now in Hell. "There is not a soul in Hell who ever intended to be there. All were going to turn to God sometime." As I said these words in a meeting, a leading business man who was present had them carried to his heart and conscience by the Holy Ghost, and that night he decided for Christ. Of all the deceptions of the Devil, I believe this is the most common and most fatal. It is so plausible. The conscience is made easy by the thought, "I mean to sometime." You remember the scene described as having occurred in the lower regions. His satanic majesty called a meeting to devise the best way

of going up and deceiving the world—that meant our world. He said to the spirits “speak on.” One said :

“Let us go up and tell them there is no God.”

“Ah,” said Satan, “that won’t do. Nature herself teaches His existence.”

Another said, “Let us go up and tell them the Bible is a fraud ; that it is a human production.”

“I’m afraid that would not deceive them either, as the Bible proves itself divine,”—And so the evil spirits went on suggesting possible deceptions until one, if possible more subtle and awful than the rest, arose and said :

“Let us go and tell them there is a God ; and that the Bible is the word of God ; let us tell them that it is all true and means just what it says ; but let us tell them not to be in a hurry about it ; they can put it off awhile ; there is plenty time.”

Satan smiled approvingly and said “*You go*,” and that spirit is in the world now, and has ruined more souls than all the other deceptions. Every one who hears the gospel means to believe and obey it *sometime*. “Procrastination is the thief of souls.”

“Will you boys in this meeting take Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and by God’s grace from this hour live for Him ?”

“Why, Mr. Meikle, we are too young. Wait till we are as old as our big brothers, and we will.”

“Will you big brothers then decide for Christ right now ?”

"Well, Mr. Meikle, we want to ; but, you see, a fellow has to 'sow his wild oats.' However, when we get married and settled down, we will."

"All right ! What are you young men, who are married and settled down, going to do with Jesus ?"

"We mean to accept Him and live for Him, but you see we have a little family growing up, and it's pretty difficult to make 'ends meet' these hard times ; and you know a man has to 'lay up a little for a rainy day,' for 'he that does not provide for his family,' etc., but as soon as we get things comfortable and a little money saved, we are going to settle this question."

"And what answer do you who have things fixed and money saved, give to this question ?"

"Oh, we are not very rich yet ; besides, as long as a man is able to work, it's his duty to do so. You know the Bible says 'diligent in business.' However, we can't work much longer, and when laid aside we mean to pay great attention to these things."

"Will all you old men then give yourselves entirely to God right *now* ?"

"We certainly should : we can't live much longer ; still we are able to garden a little, and to chore about and keep an eye to things. But we expect very soon to be too sick to do anything outside—and then the Bible and God will have our entire attention."

Yes, and the first thing some of you know, your heart will suddenly stop and your soul will be before God. Lord,

dispel this delusion ! From the children to the parent ; from the cradle to the grave, they are believing the devil's lie, that "there is plenty of time to-morrow," rather than God's truth, that "*now* is the accepted time—*now* is the day of salvation." Again we pray, "Lord dispel this delusion !" and may every one who ever means to accept the Lord Jesus Christ—"the gift of God," do it now, right now—now.



## DIFFICULTY OF BEING LOST.

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THERE is an idea abroad that it is very *easy* to be lost, and very *hard* to be saved. This prevalent notion Satan does all he can to foster, inasmuch as it is one which gives a false view of God and His love. Many talk as if the way to Hell is plain and smooth, while the way to Heaven is difficult and rough. By God's help I'm going to show that the truth is the very reverse of this, that is, while it is very easy to be saved, it is hard to be lost, and that from a place like this, the obstacles are between sinners and Hell, and not between sinners and Heaven. If a man is in a boat in a strong current going toward a fall, he hasn't to ply the oars, he has but to sit still in order to drift to death. So men and women are in the current of sin, drifting to eternal death, and in this sense have nothing to do in order to be lost. Indeed the Word of God teaches that they are lost already. However, all truth seems to have two sides, and I wish to emphasize the other side, viz., that sinners have a great deal to do before they can be lost out of a Christian land.

In the first place then, they have to neglect God's *invitations*. From Genesis to Revelation the Bible says, Come—come—"Come thou and all thy house." "Ho, every one that thirsteth come." "Come unto me all ye that labour,"

etc., and "the spirit and the bride say *come*," "all things are ready, *come*." In this last invitation, the reference is to a feast which a king made. If the leading man of this town made a feast, and sent you an invitation, would he think it a small thing if you paid no attention to it, or would you think you had nothing to do if you did not accept it? Why you had to neglect or reject it. Now God sends you an earnest invitation. Is it a small matter to neglect or reject it?

However, God not only invites you, but more wonderful He *beseeches* you. What a strong word that is. If the leading man referred to above not only invited you, but came and personally besought you to be present, would it not be worse to refuse? You say "God never besought me." Yes, he did, often. Have you not listened to preachers pleading and even beseeching you? "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2. Cor. v. : 20. "All day long I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient people." Rom. x. : 21. What an attitude of earnestness and love!

Then God is your Creator and King, and as such He has a right to *command* you, and we read "This is His command that ye believe," etc. 1 John iii. : 23.

God's invitations, God's beseechings, God's commands, are between you and Hell. Then look at all the *troubles* and *disappointments* of life. Who has not lost property, health, or friends? Is not God by His *providence*, standing at the door of your heart and knocking? Who built all these *churches* with their spires pointing to the sky? Think of all the *services*, regular and special, that have been held

in them—preaching, prayer-meeting, Bible-class, Sabbath school and evangelistic services.

And are not your Christian *friends* and acquaintances, with their *prayers* and pleadings, something for you to pass on your downward course? I know a young man who, at a revival time, said on opening a letter which he had just received, "Nothing but religion, religion. It's in the house, on the street, everywhere, and now here comes a religious letter from home." That young man did not find it easy to get past his friends and family.

A man arose in one of our meetings and said, "I had a dream. I dreamt that the streets of this place were paved with open *Bibles*, and the people were travelling down to Hell over them." Would that not apply to this place? Bibles for ten cents, Bibles for nothing, Bibles in every house containing the good news—the way of life, so simple, so free. I think the case is growing strong—*invitations*, *beseechings*, *commands*, *providences*, *churches*, *friends*, *Bibles*, all of which you have to reject or trample over on the way to perdition. Then think of God's word with its *illustrations*, *commands*, *arguments*, and even with His *oath*. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."

Besides there is His *dealings with sin* in all ages—with the Angels—our first Parents—the Antidiluvians—the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. We are expressly told of some of these, that they are "set forth for an *ensample*." How often we hear, "Well they had themselves to blame, they had warning enough by the example of others."

Then there is the *goodness* of God. Do you not know that this is meant to lead you to repentance? If I could prove to you that there is a man here to whom I have been kind—I have fed him, clothed him, helped him in trouble, etc., etc, and he has in return maligned and injured me, what would you think of him? "Oh, shame!" you say. Yes, if there is anything we seem to hate it is ingratitude. But don't be too fast in condemning this man, lest you condemn yourselves. Has not God been kind to you since you were children? Think of all his goodness in providence, and above all, his goodness in *grace*. Ah, friends, I tell you it's something to despise God's *love*. Some of us remember in school when we were punished, how bitter and vindictive we felt. We thought every stroke of the cane, "I'll be worse than ever—I'll have revenge somehow." The penalty of the law rather hardened us. But don't you remember when the teacher called you after school and said kindly, "I'm a little disappointed in you; I thought you were doing so well, and were going to be an example to the others." Don't you remember, I say, how you felt a lump rising in your throat, and your eyes somewhat moist, and although you didn't say much, you made up your mind not only to be better, but to try to influence the others to do the same? Yes, this is a big barrier on the way to Hell—God's *goodness*, God's *love*.

A story is told of a little fellow who, on his way to school, used to pass a pump from which a trough led into a house. Every time he passed he pumped water, which often ran upon the kitchen floor. One day the woman of the house waited for him, and as he made for the pump she



made for him, and catching him, brought him into the house and gave him a good ———. No she didn't give him a whipping, but she said "Sit there, my little fellow," and going to a cupboard she got a plate of cherries and setting them before him, she said, "Eat as many as you like." When he was satisfied, she said, "Put the rest in your pocket for your little brother." Now how many think that boy ever pumped any more water on that woman's floor? Friends, goodness is a big barrier. They drilled a soldier for bad behavior; they put him in irons; they put him on bread and water; they whipped him; he only grew worse; they *forgave* him; it broke his heart; it changed his life; it was a barrier he could not pass. Is it easy to go down over God's *goodness*?

*Invitations, beseechings, commands, providences, churches, Bibles, friends, arguments, oaths, examples, goodness.* Be honest now and tell me is it so easy to perish? Is the way down as easy as Satan represents? Yet the greatest obstacles remain. Is there a person here without a *conscience*? Even of the heathen, Paul says, "Their conscience the meanwhile, accusing, or excusing." Do you not know the difference between right and wrong? Is your conscience never aroused by God's law? I heard Principal Grant tell of a man who had a good, faithful dog, and one night he was awakened by its barking. He arose, and lifting the window said, "Lie down, sir." The dog ceased his barking but soon began again. This time the man was annoyed, and lifting the window, he said, "Go and lie down, sir." Again the dog obeyed, only to resume worse than ever. This time the man was vexed, and taking his revolver he shot the dog.

A few minutes later, robbers were in the house and at the man's throat. How many sinners act thus with their conscience; it gives warning; it annoys; it vexes; they rush into business and dissipation; they shoot their conscience.

Now the case grows stronger, for between the sinner and destruction is the *striving of the Holy Ghost*. Stephen could say to the Jews, "Ye do always *resist* the Holy Ghost." Sometimes we hear sinners urged not to quench or grieve the spirit. These terms, I believe, are applicable only to Christians. What sinners do, is "*resist* the Holy Spirit," and how common a thing it is! I remember a young lady who was present at one of our services. The following day she said to a friend, "I tell you it was awful last night. I thought I would never get out of the church. Every step I took made me wretched, but when I got out I soon felt better, and now I'm as happy as can be." I have watched that young woman, and from that day to this I do not know of her having any such experience. What if Dr. Alexander's hymn be true?

"There is a time we know not when,  
A place we know not where,  
That marks the destiny of men  
To glory or despair.

To pass that limit is to die—  
To die as if by stealth;  
It does not quench the beaming eye,  
Nor pale the bloom of health.

The conscience may be still at ease,  
The spirits light and gay;  
That which is pleasing still may please,  
And care be thrust away.

But on that forehead God has set  
Indelibly a mark,  
Unseen by man, for man as yet  
Is blind and in the dark.

Oh, where is this mysterious bourn,  
By which our path is crossed —  
Beyond which God Himself hath sworn,  
That he who goes is lost !

An answer from the skies is sent ;  
' Ye who from God depart,  
While it is called to-day, repent,  
And harden not your heart.' "

Besides all these, between you and eternal ruin, are the *pleadings, the tears, the life, the death* of the Lord Jesus Christ. What I mean, I can illustrate by a story I read, which, whether true or not, conveys the lesson I wish. A guide was leading a party along a dangerous shore. He came to a place where he asked the party to go up the bank that they might escape a fatal quag-mire or quick-sand. They would not believe him and were determined to keep on. The guide pleaded with them to turn aside, but to no avail. Then he ran forward, and leaping into the quick-sands, as he sank he asked, "Will you turn back now?" Sinner look at the Lord Jesus Christ as He sinks beneath the load of your sins. See Him in Gethsemane, at the Pillar and on the Cross, and ask yourself if you are prepared to keep on and pay in your own body and soul the penalty of your sin. Yes, friends, the tears, the work, the blood, the death of Christ, are between you and destruction.

*Invitations, beseechings, commands, providences, churches, Bibles, arguments, oaths, examples, God's goodness, your*

conscience, *The striving of the Holy Ghost, The work of Christ.* But now, greater than all, I have to tell you that in your way is the *Lord Jesus Christ HIMSELF.* An illustration of this, although such an old and familiar story, I repeat, because it is the best I know. A mother died leaving an husband and an only son. After her death the former was very lonely, and his boy being out in the evenings a great deal, his trouble was much increased. Day after day he asked his son to remain in with him. He would say, "Stay in with me to-night anyway, it will cheer your father." The boy always had some excuse, and so kept spending his evenings with his companions. One night the father was very earnest and said, "Won't you stay at least this one night." As ever the boy urged an excuse. "Well," said the father, "I've done everything for you. I've invited you, besought you, warned you, been good to you," and stepping to the door he laid himself down across the threshold and continued, "And now, my boy, if you are bound to go out, you will have to go over the body of your poor old father." The boy, infatuated with his pleasures, gathered himself up, and leaping over his father, went out as before.

And, sinner, in conclusion, I have to tell you that not only are all these things I have mentioned between you and death, but the Lord Jesus Christ places *Himself* in your way. We have this stated in Hebrews. It reads, "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God." I always read this, "Who hath trodden under foot *the blood* of the Son of God. A thrill of

horror ran through me as I saw that it is not His blood but Himself. Thus men who reject Him and resist the Holy Ghost, "trample under their feet the Son of God." We read of those "who crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." This is fearful, but, if possible, I think it is more awful to rush on in sin over His blessed body. Sinner, are you prepared to do this? If not by God's grace, *stop*. Decide right now that whatever others do as for you, you will not reject and trample over all these things; but from this hour you will turn to the narrow way, on which God places no obstacles, and which leads to the realms of bliss. God help you all for His name's sake.—  
AMEN.



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